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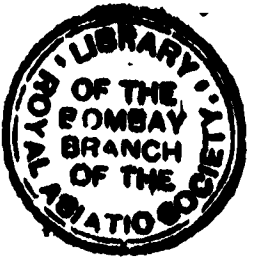
A FLIGHT TO MEXICO



"[illegible] it seems
[illegible] Thule."

[illegible] *Med.* i.

[illegible] the very spice of life,
That gives it all its flavour." . . .

[illegible] *Tempest*

CATHEDRAL OF MEXICO.

A FLIGHT TO MEXICO

By J. J. AUBERTIN

TRANSLATOR OF "THE LUSIADS,"

AND OF

"SEVENTY SONNETS OF CAMOENS; WITH ORIGINAL POEMS"

£3581
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WITH SEVEN ILLUSTRATIONS

LONDON

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A FLIGHT TO MEXICO.

CHAPTER I.

OUTWARD BOUND.

We all know the difference between writing because we want to say something, and writing because we have something to say; and if I have taken up my pen half a score of times under what I have thought to be the latter impulse, I have laid it down again as often under the misgiving that it might be really the former.

Yet once more I find it in my hand with an intention of now keeping it there; for, as I sit by my winter's fireside in London, roosting again, as it were, upon my English branch, after returning from my last flight abroad, which was this time to Mexico, I find these most recent recollections combining with many of those of former years, and so crowding on my thoughts that I am continually falling back into

contemplation of the past to the interruption of the present.

If, therefore, it be only with the view of unburdening my mind of latent memories, I feel compelled to sit down and put some few of them into visible form, even if I write only to myself, for want of a better correspondent, and, peradventure, for want of readers. For wherever one goes now, so many have been before, and so many have written so much about so many things, that one may well feel discouraged from attempting to find notice in the crowd.

Yet, again, some variety may be found in a new pen, though it does not treat of a new subject, just as a new artist may attract attention by a new mode of treating an old scene. Moreover, there is always a large reserve force of readers who have not even seen many of those books which that mythical existence, "everybody," is said to have long since read.

Of conversations and correspondence it certainly is true, that they may be found very entertaining when held upon the same subject with different persons. A popular lecturer, who worked through a whole season, repeating the same exhibition every day, explained his being able to do so because he every day had a different audience. And thus it may be in the reading of different books; in the writing of which, by the way, there is always this advantage over conversations and correspondence, that while you cannot always get people to listen

to your talk and to answer your letters, you, at all events, can enjoy the independent right to amuse yourself with composition in print, if only you will pay for your entertainment—content to bow to the perhaps unmerited coldness of both publisher and public.

Still, whatever I may write, I shall do my best to write as if it were to be read by the public, for I should drop a palsied pen at once under the bare suggestion of working for mere "family circles," or, *proh pudor*, "family opinions"! Yet there have been found many good people who have taken much trouble with nothing more than these very virtuous domestic aims in view, and have, even under this mild inspiration, written tragedies, though with the doubtless unnecessary reservation that they were not to be acted.

Everybody who has moved about at all ought to have gathered some varied store for memory to dwell upon, even if he be unable (as so many who pass for very superior people are) to say much about his experiences; and many a vacant and lonely hour he should be able to beguile by calling up past scenes of life to life again. Hence arises one of the great benefits of travelling. "In the mind's eye" you can revisit so many scenes, and recall so many incidents and persons, and thus escape so many irksome and monotonous hours in which the empty brain would otherwise be working upon and irritating itself, as

will the empty stomach, for want of food. It has seemed to me that before travelling I was like a person looking round him on a flat, and that since travelling I have been surveying panoramas from mountains.

Wordsworth was one of those who travelled not only in body, but, being a poet, travelled also in thought. He saw variety in everything, even in homely objects; and the last stanza of one of his minor poems beautifully illustrates this fact. Different poets find their subjects from different scenes; Wordsworth could find one of his most pleasing thoughts in a waving bank of daffodils, on which he writes like a real traveller:—

> "For oft as on my couch I lie,
> In vacant or in pensive mood,
> They flash upon that inward eye,
> Which is the bliss of solitude;
> And then my heart with pleasure fills,
> And dances with the daffodils."

Many there are among us, who are genuinely happy in remaining at home. But by no means all! How many may be found who, professing to want no other subjects for thought than those which lie under their very noses, come at last to think their own toes and fingers the finest toes and fingers in the world, and can scarcely stroke their chins without endeavouring to persuade themselves that they do it like Apollo! I am speaking, of course, of people with little or no occupation. You have not been

many hours or minutes in this sort of society without wishing yourself well out of it again, for it really consists of little more than bottles of common wine grown sour upon the shelf.

Not all can engage in travelling, nevertheless. Its troubles and annoyances are not unfrequently very great, and such as many who are even eager to enter on it do not count upon. Scarcely do some of these worthy people find themselves twenty miles from home, even with all the appliances of the present day, when they wish to be back again, having become nuisances to themselves, and therefore, of course, to everybody about them. To travelling, indeed, we may apply what Cowper, recluse as he was, says about retirement in his poem on that theme :—

> "But few that court Retirement are aware
> Of half the toils they must encounter there."

Be all this as it may, let every one choose for himself. For my own part, I hope still to continue moving now and then. I have not yet lost my taste for travelling, nor, on this last occasion of so doing, was I deterred from paying my visit to Mexico in the summer months, though warned that that period of the year was out of season. For not only have I found considerable advantages in doing things out of season, that is to say, when everybody else is not doing them ; but I also reflected that the city of Mexico and its surrounding country, though lying under only 20 degrees of north latitude, stand at a

height of between 7000 and 8000 feet above the sea; so that altitude must thus compensate for low latitude, and in all probability afford a charming atmosphere throughout the year.

Taking all this into consideration, and that I should have no occasion to lose time or incur danger at the unpopular port of Vera Cruz or in any other part of the large breadth of the *Tierra Caliente* (or hot country), because a railway now runs through its sixty miles of breadth from the coast, to mount afterwards among the glorious evergreen forests of the Sierra Madre towards the capital, I made no scruple in taking my return ticket for the *Moselle*, to sail from Southampton on the 2nd of June, 1881, under the command of my trusty friend Captain Jellicoe, to whom I already owed some thousands of knots of not wholly unsafe nor wholly unpleasant conduct across the mighty bosom of Old Ocean.

The day was beautiful; and trite as the thought may seem, as we left the dock at about two o'clock in the afternoon, I could not but call to mind that on the yesterday about this very hour had taken place the great "Derby" at Epsom, and that to-morrow would be the day for the "Oaks"! For how often, in years gone by, until the home centre was broken up, had my whole interest been absorbed in that anniversary, with friends invited, and a combined ride and drive of a few miles from a certain quiet rectory across Walton Heath to Epsom Downs, with half the

parish following on foot and in their best, to witness that most striking scene of country, man, and horse combined. Thus it is that, as we move on in life, our selves, our circumstances, our engagements, and our pursuits are perpetually upon the change. On this same anniversary my attractions to Epsom Downs were dead, and I was now bound for the West Indies. I was about to cross the historic Sargazo (or Gulf Weed) Sea, that caused so much trouble to grand old Columbus, and to sail thence onwards to the coast of that country where Cortés, more than three hundred years ago, vanquished and slew his thousands under that veneering word Religion, impelled by the unscrupulous impulses of conquest, rapacity, and glory.

So soon as we had settled down on board I again realized that great well known advantage of travelling out of season which I have already referred to. We were not crowded; and great, and very great is this advantage everywhere. The older we get the more we hate a crowd. June is one of the months for the homeward, and not the outward, passage on this line; and it equally happened, that when I returned in September, which is one of the months for the outward, and not the homeward, passage, I enjoyed a corresponding freedom.

All was pleasant, except that for a few days I was troubled at night by that almost certain concomitant on board ship, the tooth-cutting child. It is a very strange fact in nature, and one which surgeons

have not yet been able to account for scientifically, that every baby, of whatever age it be, always begins to cut its teeth the moment it is carried on board. Such, at all events, is the excuse always given for squallings. In my own experience, however, and without the assistance of science, I have generally detected another cause of all the nuisance. I mean the mothers, and under them the nurses, though these would be better without the mothers. So far from being disturbed by screeching, these strange beings often seem to be even enjoying it, utterly indifferent to any attempt to relieve the ears and nerves of others, for they are far too affectionate to do so. I once heard a father, who, while his child was making itself inexcusably unpleasant, was called selfish by a poor vexed lady, give vent to the transparent hypocrisy, that "a person who loved his child could not be selfish." Now, could any speech be more glaringly selfish?

Other noises on board there certainly are sometimes; and as fate, or perhaps fancy, will have it, they seem persistently to occur about three o'clock in the morning, and exactly and precisely over one's own cabin, as if by design; while the deck, your ceiling, reverberates the blows as if you were being hammered down in a packing case. Add to this the hoisting and lowering of the sails by that barbarous and unnautical machine the steam-winch; but name not the rattlings of this tormentor when working with cargo, embarked and disembarked in port! I am told, by

the way, that on board American steamers, the cog-wheels of this machine have been superseded by the application of intense pressure to smooth surfaces, and that the oppressive noise is thus remedied. We have adopted many of the New World's improvements, and why not this, so happy and so merciful an invention?

We were not numerous, as I have said; there were three ladies at the captain's table, to two of whom, one at either side of him, and one the wife of the Danish Governor of St. Thomas—he would be continually supplying salt. The third was on my left, and out of his reach. Army and navy were also represented; and as each of us had come from some different place, had followed different pursuits, was now embarked on a different destiny, and as, moreover, we had been total strangers to one another through life, we were able to enjoy that certain freshness of conversation and discussion, which is so often the charm of a voyage. Taking all this into consideration, and that, therefore, we could have no common object of small aspersion to fall upon, the Christian tone of our intercourse was, nevertheless, really very fairly sustained.

Twelve days and a half brought us to the harbour of the Danish Island of St. Thomas, so unpopular and yet so picturesque, surrounded by its varied steep green mountains, at the foot of which the clustering white city with its red roofs glittered in the centre of the curve, and sprinkled the hills behind. Without

counting a passage home, which I once made over this route, of a most uninteresting character, I may record the present one as the longest stretch at sea, without touching port, that I have yet experienced; for commerce has so sprung up in the world that ports are continually opening and inviting ships to call for passengers and cargo.

But though we did not touch land we were not quite without a sight of it, for we sailed between that group of Portuguese volcanic islands called the Açores, and so named from a species of white falcon (açor), by which they were frequented at the time of their discovery. The sight recalled to me an excursion I had made in 1880 from Lisbon, due west, and by beautiful mountainous Madeira, to St. Michael's, a name once so exclusively famous for the best oranges with few pips and thin peel. But the oranges have not only encountered rivals since those days; the orange trees have suffered considerably from disease, so that the proprietors have of late turned their attention to the growth of pine-apples, of which I visited many gardens in the neighbourhood of the chief town, Ponta Delgada.

I had hoped to catch sight, in our passage through, of the Peak of Pico, which is the name of one of the islands; it rises like a cone to the height of 7000 feet above the sea, and is the highest point in the group—a minor Peak of Teneriffe; but I was disappointed. The green fresh colour of them all—for their atmo-

sphere is damp—contrasts remarkably with the arid look of the isles of Greece. At the same time, I was also disappointed by the constant interference with the landscape by the long dark tufa walls in my drives through the island of St. Michael's.

Now I am not myself in over anxious haste to get to St. Thomas, and I have been thinking, on this our way thither, on what I have said about short passages at sea. I have been calling to mind the real intervals between ports which I have touched at, not exactly one after another on a single round voyage, but nevertheless in a continuous course with longer or shorter intervals, all round South America; passing over the Isthmus of Panama to arrive at St. Thomas from the opposite direction. In so vast a circuit it is somewhat remarkable to note how very short the sea passages are, and how this illustrates the vastness of the intercourse that has grown up between different spots of the globe since the days of Cook and Anson: a not mere idle reflection.

Suppose, then, we start from Southampton for Lisbon, with its magnificent entrance, associated with the departure of Vasco da Gama in 1497, to discover an ocean passage to India, and with Camoens, the old Portuguese epic poet, who published his "Lusiads" to celebrate that famous voyage, about a century afterwards. This grand view comprehends also the Cintra mountains, at the highest peak of which—Nossa Senhora da Pena, not Penha, nor Péña

—King Sebastian stood in 1499 to see Gama return. A thousand little wind-mills are working on the hills, and the broad Tagus pours its strong stream under a host of shipping. All this now lies only two days and a half from Southampton.

Thence we sail to that strange, brown, barren, volcanic island of St. Vincent, one of the Cape de Verde group, so named from the nearest African cape. Never could I have supposed the doctrine of development could have applied to this island; and yet, behold! it has at last developed under the establishment there of one of the stations of the Brazilian Submarine Cable Company. Here the steamers coal, and it costs you less than six days to get there, passing on your way that majestic object the Peak of Teneriffe in the Spanish "Canaries," which rises on the island of that name, more than twelve thousand feet from the sea; that is, from the deep blue level whence you gaze upon its variegated and gigantic cone. From this point you sail across the Atlantic, making another sixteen hundred miles or so; and this passage brings you to flat-shored, sun-scorched Pernambuco in Brazil, with its sharks and coral reef —whence its other name, Recife. It will cost you but a week to get there.

Hence you count but four hundred miles to the pretty bay, known to us under its Portuguese name as Bahia, its full title being Bahia de Todos os Santos, or All Saints' Bay, from the fact of its having been

discovered on a 1st of November. Here you may sometimes see whale fishing.

Add two days and a half more, and there will open to your wondering eyes the surpassing grandeur of the Bay of Rio de Janeiro, into whose vast waters, then silent and solitary, and shrouded with dark evergreen forests, Don Juan de Solis first sailed in the beginning of the sixteenth century.

Thus far we have diverged from St. Thomas to the very Tropic of Capricorn; but as I am not writing in either law or science, but in the far more unfettered and diversified occupation of recalling memories, I shall, to sustain my words, go round all South America, and come back to St. Thomas the other way on paper, as I have proposed doing.

Starting, then, again from Rio, which in fact I did on a fine 31st of January, the height of their summer, intending to course round by degrees to Panama, I found myself in four days, and for the third time in my life, at Montevideo, the capital of that very beautiful, undulating, meadow country, Uruguay. This city, it may be added, takes its name from a mountain near it, which was the first object seen on steering in (*Monte Video*), and offers the best port in this part of South America. Running hence down the coast of Patagonia, we turned in by Cape Virgins, and came to Sandy Point in four days and a half, where we coaled.

Sailing thence at night, our early morning opened

to disclose the dark frowns of Cape Froward in the Straits of Magellan on our right, which, being the southernmost point of South America, stands in these cold, dark, icy regions, at only about the same latitude, south, in which our own Flamborough Head stands north. Such is the independence of the isothermal lines in relation to latitude. Gradually running between the rocks and glaciers of this darksome strait, we came out by Cape Pillar into a then very stormy sea, though called the Pacific; and even after touching and passing some hours on shore at Coronel, we sailed into Valparaiso on the seventh day from Sandy Point.

From this city, with its port filled with shipping, consisting mainly of one large commercial street, curving along the shore, and closely backed by a large range of high, bare, brick-dust looking hills, the course up to Callao, which is the port of Lima, is run by coasting boats. These carry abundance of fruits and vegetables from Chili along the dusty shore, delivering them at the various stations, which, with the exception of Huasco, with its finest grapes and raisins in the world, have nothing of the kind to show. From Callao, stopping at Payte on the way, six days and a half brought us to Panama, with its flat shores, smooth waters, and flights of pelicans skimming through the early morning air: so that from spot to spot of this dry, dusty, mountainous western coast, so vastly different from the moist and forest-clad scenes

upon the eastern, there is really no sea passage at all. Thus far, then, I have shown that there was nothing like a twelve days' passage at sea all round the course I have described. Yet mariners have starved upon these waters.

As we are bound to get back to St. Thomas, I will add that from Panama we crossed the famous Isthmus of Darien, associated of old and for ever with Pizarro's conquest of Peru, and came to Colon by that railway of forty-one miles long, in the warfare of making which every sleeper is said to have cost a life. If this be true, peradventure, the great canal scheme of M. de Lesseps, now in progress, may cost a still greater number. At Colon, dismal and corrupt Colon, though bearing this name of Columbus, we embarked on the way to England, for St. Thomas, which island, after touching at Kingston in Jamaica, and Jacmel in Haiti, we reached in the *Nile*, as I now reach it on this page.

This wonderfully long period, however, of twelve and a half days at sea without touching land, to which I have referred, presented, after all, nothing very terrible. How often was I forced into the reflection what a mere holiday passage is this, what a mere holiday excursion, compared with the vast adventurous voyages of the great navigators of the olden time! Where Cook and Anson might have starved, and where they endured hardships in the then unknown seas they were exploring, we have the right to com-

plain of even a cold potato. And where Columbus with his three small vessels, only one of which is said to have been decked, and with his forced and misgiving crews, was wading through that same gulf weed which has given a name to these Sargazo seas, I saw children in the enjoyment of fishing up the beautiful yellow sprigs which floated above the heavier round green masses below, and decked the blue apparel of ocean with running belts of gold, drawn out upon the current.

We arrived off St. Thomas on the morning of Wednesday, the 15th of June, where those who were going to Vera Cruz were to change for a smaller vessel, the *Tiber*, Captain Horton. This vessel was to sail on the following day; but as I wished to visit the island of Porto Rico I availed myself of the departure to that island on the same evening of the *Arno*, an old friend I well remember some fifteen years ago, running between Rio and the River Plate, before the Royal Mail Company sent their large vessels farther than Brazil.

But you who may wish to make this visit, get the *visé* to your passport in London. I had obtained mine for Cuba but not for this island, and having to obtain it here, I found that the Spanish authorities at St. Thomas cannot live on trifles.

In a pouring rain I embarked on this vessel in the captain's boat from the *Moselle*, taking with me as good a blessing as Captain Jellicoe could give me,

and calling on my way on Captain Horton on board the *Tiber*, whom I was to join early on the Friday morning. By taking the coasting boat I thus obtained a whole day at Porto Rico, and sailed intending to make the best of it.

We rode into harbour early on a fine morning, which happened to be the Feast of Corpus Christi, and I disembarked and went to a hotel in what is called the Upper Town. On this anniversary I have seen wonderful processions at Rio; and I have seen one very notable one at Madrid; and in this last instance I remember being astonished on comparing the scene in the city on the Thursday with that on the Sunday in the Calle de Alcalá, preparing for the bull fight. There was little in Porto Rico to behold, beyond that all were in their best, and almost all were gazing out of windows into streets where nothing was to be seen; a habit I have observed in certain other foreign cities.

Finding there was a steam tramway at work for some thirteen kilometres, or eight English miles, I availed myself of it to see this fertile and wholly agricultural island, which yields its tobacco, sugar, coffee, and other tropical produce; and sends much of its tobacco to Cuba to receive that magic mark for England and elsewhere. The line ran through rich green scenery; my out-of-season visit showing me delightful colour everywhere. The slovenly hedges were adorned with large flowering shrubs, and the line

was flanked with trees and small huts, built on stilts, where blacks of all ages and both sexes, and tropically clad, lolled about in the shade of coffee trees and bananas, amidst the ever attendant flavour of coffee roasting. Where climates are mild and wants are few, conventional liberty appears much greater than in what is called cultivated society.

My feeding at the hotel had been very moderate, but my bed had been very cool and comfortable. For the first time in my life, I slept with only two sheets, one above and one below me; but these were laid upon a plain civilized elastic sacking, without mattress of any kind, and not upon an uncivilized flat wood-work of advanced modern invention, such as is now found in too many highly furnished houses, and upon which it is quite impossible, under any circumstances of mattress, for nature's curved back to find refreshing repose.

The *Tiber* was signalled coming in early on the next morning, and we sailed away for Porto Plata in San Domingo, leaving behind a highly pleasing scene of wood and mountain.

I found two very pleasant passengers from the *Moselle* on board: a young Frenchman and a young Swiss, who were also on their way to Vera Cruz and Mexico; and when we arrived at Porto Plata we went on shore together, and wandered through the naked town, and gazed on the prospect from the fort above. On our return by a curve of the shore we noticed a

boy in a cocoa-nut tree, gathering and flinging down the nuts, and as we stopped to look in at the rough house and garden, a very commonly clad person, perhaps the mistress of the property, asked us with that easy and hospitable grace that belongs to these races, whether we would like a draught of the milk. It was impossible to refuse the offer, not only from the manner in which it was made, but also because it presented a new experience. The nuts were not yet quite ripe and therefore they were quite full of the milk, which had not yet been absorbed into the kernel.

Now there is a certain skill required in doing everything, even, or I may say particularly, in the blacking of a boot; and as our good friend laid the nut upon its side, chopping it with a rude blade upon a rude block, I began to wonder how much of the milk must pour out and be wasted. But, so soon as the shell appeared underneath the well-known fibrous casing, she twisted up the top and dug a small hole in it with the corner of her hatchet in the most finished manner, so that not a drop of the milk was lost, but the contents of three nuts gave three tumblerfulls. No one knows what oranges and pine apples are but those who have gathered them to eat; and until we had been thus regaled, none of us had guessed what a tumbler of young cocoa-nut milk is, particularly on a hot day in the tropics.

On the same evening we left the green hills and

flowering trees behind, and sailing up the long extending coast of the important Island of Cuba in a north-westerly direction, made the noble port of San Juan, Havannah, on the morning of the 21st of June, where we were to coal. It was a dull wet evening, but I went ashore with the captain, among the flat, straight streets and the cubic houses, till we came to the great centre Plaza de Armas, where we dined very badly off what was prepared, including certain inedible oysters. Then to the "Cervantes" with one or two friends, whom the captain found at the large *café*. This was a sort of second-rate theatre where dances of a somewhat startling kind took place. We rowed back by boat again at night, and though we were coaling on the following day, I deferred a second visit to Havannah till my return, wandering about the hills and viewing the large city from above.

Finally, at half past four we sailed; and a ghostly comet, which I was called to see, attended our ghostly morning moon on our course to Vera Cruz, before whose flat, malarious, hot shore we found ourselves at anchor very early on the Sunday morning of the 26th—Vera Cruz, the chief city and the (so called) port, on their eastern shore, of the United States of Mexico, built upon the spot where three centuries and a half ago Cortés landed, and founded empire and returned; and where, in our own day Maximilian landed, to assume an empire, and returned not.

CHAPTER II.

VERA CRUZ TO MEXICO.

THUS ended a most pleasant and successful passage of some 5600 miles from Southampton, with a difference by longitudinal calculation of some six hours of time, noon having been continually put back as we travelled westward in obedience to that arbitrary power belonging to sea captains of daily crying "make it noon." Off go eight bells, as soon as the word is given, and a new twenty-four hours' calculation is begun.

Every one who has travelled by sea is supposed to know that eight bells is the highest number ever struck, and that these occur at noon and at every succeeding period of four hours; viz., at every twelve, four, and eight of the clock, after which the first solitary one is struck again to signify the first half hour. But a good lady (fortunately an amusing one), at the striking of noon one day, on a passage I was making, came across the deck and flouncing down by my side, as if I had been doing something I had promised not to do, exclaimed in a most decided tone:—

"There! there go those ridiculous bells again."

"No," I said, "they have just taken their observation, and find our longitude gives us noon: *i.e.* eight bells."

"But they strike eight bells at eight o'clock, and why not twelve at twelve o'clock?"

"Because they count by 'watches' on board."

"Well, what's the difference between watches and clocks? I never shall understand those ridiculous bells!"

"No, no, not that kind of watches, but the four-hour watches of the crew. When you hear eight bells at twelve o'clock, as you did just now, you have only to count on for every odd number a half hour, and for every even number an hour, until you get to four o'clock and then you must begin again."

"I think," said my friend, "I have heard that sort of explanation before; but I am sure it is not always so regular through the whole twenty-four hours."

"No, it is not—you are right—because in order to dodge or zig-zag the hours of the watch so that the same men should not always be on watch at the same returning hour, night and day, the four hours between four o'clock in the afternoon and eight o'clock at night are divided into two watches; so that at six in the evening the bells stop at four bells, when a new watch is called, and then they begin again at one bell instead of going on with five, and the watch is thus changed over; but eight bells are always struck at

eight at night; so thus the number jumps from three bells at half past seven to eight bells at eight. These short watches are called dog-watches.".

"Oh! those are what I hear called 'dog-watches,' —why?"

"Well, I used to think it was a corruption of dodge-watches, as they are intended to dodge the hours, as explained; but I believe the term does really signify that they are short or mean watches, as we talk of dog violets when without scent."

My friend was highly gratified with this short conversation, and said "ho!" but as she was sitting by me when eight bells struck at noon on the following day she turned round and syllabically said :—

"Well, I have no doubt it is all right, but I still must say they are ridiculous bells!"

How many very much more important subjects are thus treated after explanation and proof, laugh as we may at the lady and her ridiculous bells!

Vera Cruz, the chief city (as I have said) and (so called) port on the east coast of the United States of Mexico on their eastern shore, cannot be said to offer a very engaging aspect to the curious eye of the traveller. It is a naked-looking town, built of white-looking cubic or flat-roofed houses, with certain domed churches, lying on a long low shore, which fades into the distance on both sides, quite uninteresting and devoid of feature. On your left as you face the land stands the dreary-looking

and broken-walled castle of San Juan de Ulloa, built by the Spaniards, of course; and on your right the by no means handsome railway station, though this is now being vastly improved. "Little did the conqueror imagine" (writes Prescott in his romantic volume of the "Conquest of Mexico") "that the desolate beach on which he first planted his foot was one day to be covered by a flourishing city, the great mart of European and Oriental trade, the commercial capital of New Spain." It is in this tone that Prescott writes all through his entertaining volume, in reading which it is, however, to be remembered that he never visited the country.

The salubrity of Vera Cruz can lay claim to no better fame than its beauty. It is infested by the yellow fever, which is there called the vomito; and its marshy position not only adds to the power of this disease but adds an auxiliary also in the shape of malarious fever. These two dismal visitors were so busy in their calls at different houses when we arrived, that the captain issued strict orders against any of the officers or crew going on shore for the few days the vessel was to stay there. The population is stated at 19,000, and by inquiries I made before leaving the country, first of a judge and then of a doctor, as to the truth of what had been stated to me in Mexico city, I verified the fact that there had been days on which as many as thirteen and even fifteen deaths had occurred from the vomito. This proportion of deaths to popula-

tion, even if occurring but occasionally, is a very serious circumstance in connection with the principal port of the country; and now that Mexico is growing daily into importance, and appears (let us hope) to be about to enter the political and commercial families of the world in earnest, and to be cured of her intermittent fever of revolutions, the truth should be acknowledged and dealt with. Vain are the promises and temptations of interior wealth, if they all lie behind a pestiferous port, where the resident merchants and agents are called on to go through so much anxiety in connection with the going out and coming in of goods and passengers, and where the labourers are so much exposed to the heat of the sun. In tropical ports one naturally looks for fevers; and in too many for yellow fever; but Vera Cruz stands out very darkly in the list. In Rio de Janeiro, for example, with a population of nearly 300,000, I do not remember (speaking of a period since 1860) ever having seen a larger list than fifty of such daily deaths advertized. At all events, I never remember to have seen so many as sixty. And of late years, though that old city is now quite unworthy of the advancing country and the port, these numbers have very considerably diminished. True it is, no doubt, that the glorious hills close round Rio make its climate very unlike that of the Mexican city.

Now in earlier days, when Vera Cruz was without resources, and the country in general in such a dis-

ordered state that death by yellow fever was perhaps less sure and sudden than by a certain sharper sort of attack, matters might have been thought careless, and the Press, knowing things to be so, may have wished to disguise the real facts; but no such pretext for concealment can possibly be pleaded now. Commerce, or the means of living, as well as life itself, suffers by it; and the strange incongruity exists that one of the finest currents of communication in the world from port to capital has its terminus in a mere plague spot. Where remedies, or great alleviation even, are at hand, it ought not to be difficult to acknowledge and attack evils.

As we arrived on a Sunday things looked all the more still and uninviting; much silence where we know there is much sickness is not exhilarating. I could not help reflecting, what would this place be if the skies were dull! So much does glittering sunshine adorn the scene, though in truth it may be in some sense pernicious. Nor were these reflections at all interfered with by my call at the house to which my letter of introduction was addressed, where I found only one young representative, still very weakly though convalescent—not from yellow fever, however, for he "had that before;" but—from "*only* malarious fever." Such is Vera Cruz in its season; but such it need not be; nor will the sort of anti-attractions it can thus offer be removed by denying their existence. Alleviation and improvement ought to be attempted.

But though I speak of the uninteresting shores of Vera Cruz, which offer nothing like a real harbour, and nothing to engage the eye, I must not forget the glorious, though too distant, mountain range of the great Sierra Madre Oriental, that expands its complicated forms beyond the flat Tierra Caliente, and in the midst of which rises the towering snow-capped Peak of Orizaba to a height of some 18,800 feet above your deck. No mountain can look more glorious than does this monarch, surrounded by his court, and rearing his snowy crown at a distance, in straight line, of some eighty English miles. He is, as may be remembered, one of the three great mountains that adorn these districts and the valley of Mexico city; and he boasts of the easiest name. The other two I shall speak of in their turn. The peak is not always visible from Vera Cruz, and rarely so in the summer months, when he is too often hidden in thick mists. This being so, I should perhaps add to my description of him the frank declaration that, though I have repeatedly seen him since, we saw nothing whatsoever of his majesty on our arrival. Many and many a time during my two months in the country, I have gazed on him from almost every point of view, and on leaving him for the last time he seemed to me, as did the interior of the dome of St. Peter's on a like occasion, more grand and beautiful than ever.

It was very early, as I have said, that we anchored off Vera Cruz on the morning of Sunday, the 26th

of June, but it was not long before we were boarded by the usual officers of police, and custom house; and of *health*, as a matter of course. The gentlemen belonging to the customs denomination always remain on board during the whole period of the vessel's stay, and have their due allowance of food and wine. I don't know that many came on board here, but I omitted to mention that at Havannah, where they are very strict in their duties, the authorities manage to feed as many as they can; and some half-dozen guards lolled and smoked and sat on passengers' chairs there, and chatted among themselves, seeming to undergo their arduous and self-denying occupation very creditably. "Blessed is the man" (says John Wesley somewhere) "whose duties and whose inclinations run together:" and few would be sceptical as to such a dogma. However, "one touch of Nature makes the whole world kin," and, after all, most of us get what we can out of the world while we are in it; why not, then, a custom house spy, whose very business teaches him to be crafty?

One pleasant little dry man, however, of this class came on board at Vera Cruz, with whom I engaged in conversation before disembarking. Concerning this particular step, by the way, there was much doubt at first, as we were informed that there was no train to Mexico before twelve at night. No sooner had this intelligence been given than, as a matter of course, somebody else said, "Yes, there is," and then, to com-

plete the pleadings, somebody else replied, "No, there isn't." In the result, my French and Swiss friends—the only two first-class passengers besides myself—being rather called upon to deliver their letters as soon as possible, pushed off in a boat to the quay, and volunteered to send me certain news in due course of time. They kept their word, despatching a letter to say positively that there was a train at mid-day, which I afterwards learned the railway company, like men who understand business, always put on as far as Orizaba for passengers arriving by the packets. So I agreed to wait and breakfast; and the captain and I were afterwards to go ashore together in his gig; for this present voyage was likely to be his last to Vera Cruz, and he had never yet seen the city of Mexico. Therefore, I persuaded him this was the proper occasion for so doing, and we agreed to make that journey together.

Not being by constitution very often inclined to sit with my mouth wide open and my eyes close shut when anything new is at hand, nor being one who labours under the ridiculous delusion that silence and isolation are undeviating evidences of a superior intelligence—though they may often forge its signature—I began to sport my Spanish with the little dry man. He was a native of Vera Cruz; he had been bred and born there; therefore he had never had the vomito. That consequent immunity he assured me was an undeniable fact; Vera Cruz, they say, never slays her own children by that fever. "And more-

over, señor," he said, "I have lived here now some fifty years to know that in several instances, husbands have brought down their wives in the cool season to pass their period of confinement here, in order that their offspring may be fever-proof." I have asked this question since in various quarters, and have been told that, at all events, this course has certainly been taken with that view. If this be true, the child would be invulnerable even in the heel.

Our conversation wandered over other subjects, and at length I said, nodding towards the quay, "If you have passed so many years here, of course you saw the Emperor Maximilian arrive?"

"Ah, señor," he replied, "I saw him come, and I saw his dead body carried away; and the same ship, the *Novára*, served for both purposes. The Emperor ought to have got on board again directly, and gone back then."

"Why do you say so?"

"Because there was not a true voice raised for him."

"But I have understood that the keys of the city were presented to him; that there was a great address delivered, and a great deal of shouting."

"All that is true. But all was done by the Ajuntamiento (the corporation), and under their orders, and all was paid for. I was among the people, and we were all quite mute. Some, indeed, took the money and did not shout."

I thought of Northumberland's words to Lord Grey, while leading his levied forces through London, under the orders of the Council, against Mary's cause —"Many come out to look at us, but I find not one who cries 'God speed you.'"

"But what was your dislike to Maximilian?"

"We could have had none; but we felt he was an Emperor and a foreigner, and that he had been thrust upon us from Europe. And one small fact made me think he was an actor of a part; for he refused to walk on the carpet that had been laid down for him, and walked by the side of it. This sort of manner was of no value to us. And then he told us the Almighty (Todopoderoso) had surely sent him. It is always easy to say this. But if the Todopoderoso sent him, he deceived him and deserted him, and left him to death."

"I agree with you about the use of that word, the Todopoderoso. Everybody makes use of it for his own purposes, yet everybody professes to venerate what it is intended to represent."

"Ah, señor, Maximilian ought to have gone back directly."

In reference to this conversation, I was afterwards assured that one Señor Montez, a Cuban, known to be very parsimonious, paid twenty-five cents each—about a shilling—to fifty men to cheer Maximilian. Many of them afterwards denied the cheering, but did not deny having had the money. It is on record that the

coldness of the reception was so marked that the Empress shed tears.

The quarter-master having now told me that the captain's gig was ready, I went on shore; but the captain did not accompany me, as he had decided to stay on board all that day and take the regular midnight train direct to Mexico. A few strokes of the oar brought me to the landing place, and I passed my baggage in the large quadrangle of the Custom House without difficulty. Porters for each article, counting among them a separate stick and umbrella tied together, immediately pressed their services upon me; but having weeded them down to three we took our way along the straight, hot, naked street that led towards the railway station, where I naturally produced my letter of introduction from London, addressed to the general manager of the enterprise, Mr. Edward Wilhelm Jackson. That able and indefatigable officer, however, to whom I afterwards came to owe so large a portion of my pleasure and information during my two months' stay in the country, was not in Vera Cruz; nor was I so unacquainted with the usual course of life in such occupations in such countries, to suppose that on such a day and in such a place it was at all likely I should find a general manager. It would scarcely have been more absurd to look for an iceberg in the Gulf.

However, to have shown and re-pocketed the letter was enough, and all was easily arranged for going to

Orizaba. I then found my way to the correspondents to whom my letter of introduction already mentioned was directed, and on the huge outside door being pulled open in a ghostly manner by a long string from the balcony in the quadrangle, the interview I have referred to occurred. All things lay under a hot Sunday silence. In going to and fro, certain memories came back to me. I remembered my first walk in the streets of Santos, the now flourishing port of the beautiful province of São Paulo in Brazil, some twenty-two years ago, when a batch of foreigners from Europe were about to invade those gifted districts and scar the hanging forests of the Serra with a railway.

The position of Vera Cruz is, in truth, not unlike that of Santos in one respect, that on this Mexican coast Nature has arranged one of her many curious anomalies to correspond with that of the Brazilian. The country you are in quest of is magnificent; I mean magnificent in fertility and climate. But before you can get to this magnificence you have first to run along a low unwholesome tract of land, and then you have to mount an enormous land cliff of primeval forest. For myself, who now know both these railways, it was impossible not to compare them, as regards these common features, though it must be understood that those belonging to the Mexican railway far and away surpass those belonging to that of São Paulo. As regards the actual city of Santos itself, it presents a totally different aspect in its posi-

tion from Vera Cruz. The latter, as I have said, stands out blankly, in cubic detail, upon the long, low, open shore of the gulf; but Santos lies some few miles up a winding river, clothed on both sides with trees and herbage, and presenting from its shores a remarkably picturesque combination of wood and water. It cannot be compared with Vera Cruz as to unhealthy qualities; it is not really unhealthy, although now and then liable to a visitation of yellow fever; but it is enervating. From the city to the foot of the Serra do Mar (in Spanish Sierra del Mar) the line runs for thirteen or fourteen miles, through a forest of stunted trees, there called mangroves, the roots of which at low tide lie completely open to the eye, and at high tide are covered with water. Frogs croak and sing, and fireflies shine by night. At the end of the fourteen miles the São Paulo railway begins that ascension which corresponds with that of the Mexican railway; but the height which the São Paulo line has to attain for reaching the table lands (though by no manner of means flat table lands) of the province, represents just two thousand six hundred feet. This ascent is laid out in four inclines at a gradient of about one foot in ten, and it occupies a length of five miles in all. Locomotives are, of course, out of the question: but the trains are worked up and down by steel ropes on four succeeding lifts, at the top of each of which is a platform, with a large stationary engine to work the rope of its incline; letting down and drawing

up three carriages or waggons at a time. The line runs slanting up the cheek of a huge wooded buttress of the great Serra, and the height above mentioned of two thousand six hundred feet being once attained, all the peculiar difficulties of ascent to the table land of that line cease.

But when we started from Vera Cruz, I felt that all the work before us must leave the São Paulo railway in miniature; for the great distance of the Sierra Madre Oriental was before my eyes, and I also knew that to reach Mexico City we must rise not less than seven thousand three hundred and fifty feet. Well, at noon we started with a goods train, to the end of which our first-class car was coupled; so that the view was always open as we passed over the line, which presented a certain imposing aspect to the unaccustomed eye, as the rails and bridges developed themselves with easy regularity. The journey seemed to represent, as it were, a new march to Mexico, but without a Cortés. I had the tolerably well known parallelogram ticket in my pocket; no Tlascalans were before us; our only possible enemy was the malaria over the Tierra Caliente, and that we were leaving behind us; nor was our invasion to extend into the unknown country farther than Orizaba.

This Tierra Caliente is a marvellous stretch of hot low-lying country, through which the line, before arriving at the station called Paso del Macho, which

is technically considered as the base of the mountains, covers a length of some forty-seven miles. But Paso del Macho is already some four hundred and seventy-five metres, or one thousand five hundred and fifty feet above Vera Cruz, for the Tierra Caliente is very undulating, though low. The view over the vast expanse of country that you are leaving behind, and are gradually beginning to look down upon, is most impressive. You have undulated over various gradients, passed over various open girder bridges, gazed upon those sheets of a peculiar class of rank vegetation flourishing in air and soil in which the plant delights, but where the human frame sickens; you have noted multitudes of cattle, and of well-shaped cattle, too, that spread themselves over their marshy, juicy, pasture, and evidently thrive on it; and now the whole expanse lies out before you, as you rise, like a great land-ocean, extending to an horizon far and far more remote than any that can be seen at sea, even from the highest topmast in a glittering noonday sunshine.

And here is now before us this vast Sierra Madre. It is not to be overcome in five miles of four lifts by fixed engines; for the line—I am speaking now by anticipation—has to traverse an extent of no less than sixty miles through its varied and, I might say, stupendous features, before it emerges at the top station called Boca del Monte, or the Mountain's Mouth. Here the elevation is given as something like two thousand four hundred metres, or about seven thousand eight

hundred feet, for the line, as I have said, rises higher than Mexico itself before arriving there; indeed, the highest point of all is marked at eight thousand one hundred and fifty feet above sea level at a station called Soltepec beyond the Sierra. From these particulars the trying features of the Sierra Madre may be conjectured. It is a broken Sierra; there is no mere cheek of a mountain to get up, as at São Paulo: that same work in itself, albeit, having cost great labour and great difficulty in the forest explorations and the execution.

It is between Paso del Macho and Orizaba, which lies just eighty-two miles from Vera Cruz, and at an altitude of one thousand two hundred and twenty-seven metres, or about four thousand feet, that the most remarkable example of interruption occurs. After passing the station of Fortin there is encountered the enormous barranca, or gorge, of Metlac. Here I may give some idea of the size of the works, without being technical (which perhaps, by the way, I cannot be), by saying that had the line been taken tolerably straight across this chasm from the spot where the engineers came upon it, they must have constructed a gigantic viaduct of some one thousand three hundred feet long, whereof the greatest height would have been four hundred feet. But naturally shrinking from the risks of so enormous a structure, as well as from the consequences of any disturbance happening in it during traffic, they ran their line down

the cheek of one side towards the head of the gorge, crossed it by an iron bridge with the most rapid curve they could venture on, and ran it up the other side; some few short tunnels being thus rendered necessary.

Even as the line now stands, constructed in its most feasible form, we find the gradients to and from the bridge running at an incline of from two and a half to three per cent., and occupying a length of about three miles in all, up and down; while the iron lattice girder viaduct presents the following characteristics and dimensions: it measures five hundred and fifty feet in length, with ten piers; it stands one hundred feet high in the centre; it is constructed at a curve of three hundred and twenty-five feet radius, which extends to rather more than a semicircle, viz. one hundred and eighty-six degrees; and it has a lift or tilt of six and a half inches, with guard rails, so as to secure a perfect immunity from the centrifugal force.

We had already passed the beautiful gorge and waterfall at Atoyac (rendered still more romantic to my imagination afterwards from my being told by Mr. Jackson that the workmen were hung over the rocks by ropes to complete the cutting out of the line), and it was growing rather dusk within the shadows of the vast and dense ever green forest trees of Metlac, when we ran down our incline towards the viaduct. And the brakes being loosed to cross it with a sufficient velocity to give us a fair spring for the ascent

on the other side, it thus came to pass that something of illusion heightened my impressions of a passage which subsequent journeys over the same scene realistically contributed to dissipate. The fact is, that all the working of the line is conducted with great care, and affords little pretext even to affected timidity for the luxury of a scream.

It was quite dark when we arrived at Orizaba—Orizaba of sad Imperial remembrances; for here it was that took place those vacillating discussions—discussions which I call "The vacillations of Orizaba,"—which, ending, as vacillations always do, in the worst course being taken, brought to pass that final tragedy of Querétaro—the triple execution at the Cerro de las Campanas.

Fortunate for me it was that I came with my Swiss and French companions, and fortunate for the Frenchman too; for had we not been together, I don't think either he or I would have found a bed! After a long dark walk we at last came to the hotel to which our Swiss friend had brought a letter from Vera Cruz, and we stood with it at the bottom of a large, open, dark staircase, waiting like prisoners to hear their sentence. Twice the letter was sent up, and twice brought down again unopened, with the message that all was full. In short, we stood condemned.

Here I was again reminded of my Brazilian experiences. As all fly from Rio to the romantic scenes

of Tijuca, or, farther off, to Petropolis, in the hot and perhaps fever days of Rio de Janeiro, so here all had fled from pestiferous Vera Cruz to Orizaba. I became desperate, and though the letter was not mine, I insisted it should be opened.

"Open it."

"It's of no use to do so."

"Open it and read it."

"It is not addressed to me."

"Then take it up again, and have it opened and read by the proper person."

Thus urged, the letter mounted a third time, and this third time there came down a merciful reply from above to the three beseeching mortals. So we followed it up, and found a German landlord willing to do his best to oblige his friend at Vera Cruz. This he did by supplying us with supper; after which, three ingenious bedsteads were arranged for three ingenious beds, in a room whence less ungraceful, but totally inapplicable, furniture had been removed for our night's accommodation.

Orizaba, in truth, though not so very invigorating in itself, is the first healthy halt on the line after leaving Vera Cruz, in reference to which I have already given its height and distance. Strictly speaking, I suppose it may be said to occupy the limit of the coffee, tobacco, and sugar growing districts in these parts of the country. Cordova, which is the station below, is essentially a coffee producing country, and

the line passes through plantations; but it is extremely unhealthy, and cases even of the yellow fever have occurred there from time to time; but whether these are engendered in Vera Cruz and brought there, may be open to discussion. Only a short distance below it, a hacienda (farm) called Potrero, abundantly fertile, was pointed out to me as having been twice sold at diminished prices, and now abandoned on account of its bad climate.

Under such circumstances fertility is of no more value than sterility—

> "Will Fortune never come with both hands full,
> But write her fair words still in foulest letters?"

But there are many, many healthy fields for coffee elsewhere in Mexico.

As regards yellow fever, by the way, I found the same thing said of it that I used to hear in Rio. Whoever has imbibed it is sure to die if he goes up into the mountain air. Only when the patient is quite convalescent is it safe to make the change. I was myself at Petropolis in 1877, when the Italian Minister died in our hotel under those circumstances. He had been down to Rio, and came back unwell. In three days he was buried.

The train that was to take us to Mexico was the regular one which left Vera Cruz at midnight, and it was to leave Orizaba at half-past six in the morning. At that hour we accordingly met it, having ordered a carriage to take us to the station, which did not

come, and having found a tramway which served us much better.

On its arrival I observed one particular feature in it which distinguished it from our extra train of last night. One of the cars was filled with an escort of soldiers in command of a colonel, who occupied a compartment to himself. This is an indispensable necessity for safety, and is an undeviating custom as to all regular trains that carry specie, or any other cargo of a tempting and easily purloined nature. Such, also, I afterwards found to be still the case with Diligencias upon the so-called roads. The country must still lie under the ban of being infested with brigandism; and not only so, but almost everybody carries a revolver at his side, and very often a belt of cartridges about his waist; not counting a certain well-known and generally hidden sharp auxiliary.

Fate is very obstinate sometimes in trifles. On taking my ticket I again asked for Mr. Jackson, and on being referred to the station master, I was told he was up-stairs, but not up! The telegram that had been despatched from Vera Cruz on my arrival there, had been sent to Mexico; but he had left that city for Orizaba the day before, so that even though we were both close together, the barrier between the sleeping and the waking world lay between us, and I missed him. Leaving my letter, therefore, I departed for the capital, and took my seat in the

compartment with the colonel, whose conversation indicated no fear of being called upon for fire and slaughter. After traversing the green and flat valley of Orizaba, where Mr. Braneth, the resident director of the company, is upon the point of completing a large well-appointed cotton mill (of which establishments in Mexico I shall say more hereafter), the line again begins to fight its way among rocks, woods, and streams.

There is always what is called "a little hell" in roads of this class, and there is one here. There was one on the Serra of São Paulo, over which, likewise, a vast viaduct was carried. Here it is called "Infiernillo:" there "Inferninho;" the two *l*'s in the first and the *nh* in the second giving the syllable a liquid sound. On the St. Gothard in Switzerland we all know there is a "Devil's Bridge." So there is at Aberystwith. Why is all this grandeur of scenery dedicated to "the Evil One"? The Wesleys complained long ago that that mythical personage had all the best tunes. For one spot, however, that I remember in Brazil, I did not grudge the name; it was a mud passage on a steep incline on the old mule road from Santos to São Paulo. Here, in the Sierra Madre, a rushing stream in a deep gorge is crossed by one of the many beautiful girder bridges on the line, after traversing a yet more graceful structure called the Joya. Then comes a very valley of paradise, called Maltrata, and here the

up and down trains meet and the escorts are interchanged.

This really flourishing valley lies at a height of five thousand five hundred feet above the sea, with a very fine view of the Peak of Orizaba. It is surrounded, of course, by mountains, up one side of which, known by the name of the "Cumbres" (though that word really means the summits), the engineers had to find their way, and up which it would be difficult for a new comer to believe there was a line, were it not that its profile is visible here and there on high, along which the coming train may at intervals be traced, meandering steadily downwards, inside cuttings and on open embankments, towards the station. When it quite disappears and seems close at hand as the crow flies, it still delays; and why? What has become of it? what has happened? Nothing; it has to traverse what is called "the boot"; as perfect a boot as Calabria itself, and worked on a very much more cramped last. I have seen some fine mountain railways in different countries which I may more particularly refer to, but for works and beauty of scenery the Mexican railway must stand first.

The final bridge at the head of the Cumbres is crossed at fifteen hundred feet above the Maltrata station, and on this part of the line there must be ten continuous miles of descent with certain grades of four per cent. From Maltrata to Alta Luz station there are nine

miles marked. I observed that the double Fairlie engines were worked throughout the Cumbres, for which they are considered indispensable: and hand-brakes are preferred to the mechanical.

When we had surmounted all this ascent and taken our last view (perhaps the most striking of all) of the valley as we emerged from our long and complicated Sierra course, we found ourselves upon the table or upper land, and came to a very good breakfast at Esperanza. Here, then, we had left the mountains, and here we left the beauties with them. The line hence to Mexico presents no special feature of scenery. Mountains and hills there always are on all sides in the distance, and when the weather is fine a particularly striking view of the Peak (as I afterwards proved) is obtained from Esperanza, where his large and comparatively near white masses, sparkling in the sun, are fronted by a varied group of rosy and dark purple crags. As Mexico is approached, the other two snow mountains, making up the well-known trio, gradually rise before you. The first seen is Popocatapetl, or "the Mountain that smokes." It presents a perfect cone, from whose deep crater Prescott represents, in his usual style, the followers of Cortés as gathering sulphur for gunpowder. As you advance, this mountain's close attendant, Iztaccihuatl, or the "Woman in White," discloses its far more varied outline. Both are snow-mountains, and are splendidly visible from Mexico, but they were invisible on my arrival. Their

heights range with that of the Peak of Orizaba. A large flat expanse of cereal and pasture lands, sheeted alternately with maize, wheat, oats, and beans, and sprinkled with numerous groups of sheep and cattle, continues to the city; the bulls and cows still showing a very pretty breed. There is no fencing; all is open; and in the distances, from time to time, are to be seen the naked flat-topped dwellings of the hacienderos, or farmers.

Among all these well-known features of cultivation, however, there appeared one which must be quite as novel to many as it was to me; the cultivation of the aloe, which is here called the maguey. As you approach the plains (llanos) of Apam the whole country seems occupied with this plant, and you learn that it is grown for the production of that vastly popular and indeed indispensable national drink called pulque. Numbers of sour and uninviting looking barrels were lying about the stations; but of all this I must speak more particularly in another page, with the respectful attention and precision which this subject demands.

Suffice it to say, that with many a long and straight, though not severe, gradient, and with much dust before the rain came on, and much mud and water afterwards, the train ran along into Mexico by about a quarter to seven, covering the distance of two hundred and sixty-four miles from Vera Cruz (all trains being "mixed") in something short of nineteen hours.

PLANTATION OF MAGUEY.

CHAPTER III.

FIRST DAYS AT MEXICO.

A DARK wet night for arriving in a strange city forbids all chance of imbibing a first general impression of its aspect on driving into it; and this was the case with me on arriving at Mexico. The hotel "Iturbide" being the house I was recommended to, I ordered the coachman to drive me there, and a quarter of an hour's jolting brought me to a large entrance opening into a court-yard with a covered colonnade on two sides of it.

There was no porter to await guests; I saw only a few loungers, one of whom directed me to the farther left-hand corner of the quadrangle, or court-yard, for the dull bureau or *despacho* of the hotel. Thither I walked, the coachman following with such luggage as I had brought with me, for I had left portmanteaux and keys with a smart young gentleman on the railway with "Express" marked on his hat, who was to pass them through the *octroi*.

On applying for a room I was conducted up a cold looking, double stone staircase into a lofty

corridor, running round the quadrangle, and shown into a rather large-sized front room, not very luxuriously furnished, which I took for a term at two dollars, or eight shillings, a day, linen and lights included; the single-day charge being three dollars.

The boarding arrangements were separate, and the dining-room, on entering which you passed the kitchen doorway, was to be found downstairs at the corner of an inner and smaller court. I was not over-critical for the first night, but I thought there was a cold and out-of-repair look throughout, and the hotel inspired me with no anticipations of a very brilliant city. After dining, I found to my annoyance that my portmanteaux had arrived, and had been taken in without the keys, nor could it be explained to me how the oversight of thus receiving them had happened; and this I again took as interpreting that brains were not yet very active in Mexico. However, late at night "Express" appeared with the keys, and, a thousand apologies besides. New systems are only dawning here as yet.

When I opened my window in the morning I found it looked out into the *calle* (or street) San Francisco. This street is the principal one in Mexico, and runs in a straight line from the Alameda, or public gardens planted with trees, to the great Plaza, where the cathedral stands. On coming downstairs I took a survey of the hotel, which I found to be of a somewhat pretentious character, though somewhat tawdry

in general effect. Its name gives it an interest. It is, as I have said, a large building with a quadrangle, or court-yard, and contains two main storeys, the entrance and windows being adorned with red zig-zag stone or stucco patterns. In its present state it contains a large *café* and billiard-room, occupying the whole length of the right-hand side as you enter. On the opposite side, under the colonnade, the Americans, who are now trickling into the country, with every indication of soon beginning to pour into it, have managed to get partitioned off a long sitting-room, with pianoforte, chairs, and tables. In the inner and smaller courtyard there are baths, not very luxurious, nor in very good repair, and the water of which, after rain, is often stained with earth. The restaurant is a long dull room, looking out, with three windows opening to the ground, on a small untidy garden with one or two trees, and a sort of pavilion for dining. The roof of the hotel is, like those of all other houses in Mexico, flat. These flat roofs are called "azoteas," and a fine view is obtained from this and from many of them.

As regards the eating and drinking, I can give it no good character. The meat and mode of serving it are very poor, and the wine, imported from France, is very dear and very ordinary. Four shillings will procure you only what is bottled in Mexico; and it is far from being of a quality that would have inspired an ode from Horace.

Such are the present destinies and attractions of the Iturbíde, the name of which, as I have said, is attractive, for it is historical. This same hotel was once the palace of the ill-starred Don Agustin de Iturbíde, whose attempt to establish a first empire was shorter than was that to establish a second, and whose ultimate fate was as tragical as Maximilian's. This unhappy individual, who appears to have taken death as a matter of course when it came, was one of the main instruments in bringing about the independence of Mexico, which was declared free by the Treaty of Cordova in 1821, under the limited monarchy of Don Ferdinand VII., then King of Spain. Spain, however, rejected this treaty, and eventually, on the 27th of September, 1821, the Army of the Three Guarantees, "Religion, Union, and Independence," with sixteen thousand men and sixty-eight pieces of artillery, entered the capital and declared absolute Independence.

A regency was proclaimed of five persons, of whom Iturbíde formed one, with Don Juan O'Donoju, the last of the sixty-four viceroys whom Spain had sent, since Cortés had planted—and watered—the Cross. So far so good, and the Mexiçan state, as then constituted, extended from Guatemala to Texas, the Californias and New Mexico. But the political volcanoes of the country again broke forth. Congress was installed, for example, on the 24th February, 1822—the exact date of the month, by the way, of the latest

overthrow of the monarchy in France—and on the 18th of May following a *pronunciamiento*, i.e. *a coup d'état*, or a revolution, took place in Mexico, and, lo! Don Agostin Iturbíde was declared Emperor as Agostin I., and solemnly crowned in the cathedral on the 21st of June, 1822.

Congress disapproving of all this, the easy and decisive step was taken of dissolving that assembly on the 30th of October. But the volcano again broke forth in the eruption of the famous Santa Anna, who proclaimed a republic at Vera Cruz on the 6th December. Iturbíde here showed no "vacillations." He decided to abdicate, which step he took on the 20th of March, 1823, and on the 11th of May following fled to England with his family. But in an evil hour—and this fact may have borne its fruits in 1867—he took it into his head to return. On the 4th of July, 1824, he re-appeared, and landed at Soto la Marina, a port between Tampico and Matamoras, being apparently unaware of a decree by which he had been outlawed. Detected, imprisoned, and condemned, he was summarily shot upon the 19th of the same month, against the church wall at Padilla. Such was the career and such the fate of the man who once occupied this hotel as a palace.

In walking out into the street after breakfast, I fell in with a fellow-lodger, a Mr. West, who opened conversation with me, and whom I straightway knew to be what we call, by way of distinction (for under

that name they have distinguished themselves), an American. He proved to be one of those stirring gentlemen from the States—*the* States—who have come to wake up Mexico with railways. He was quite a young man and was engaged in an important contract for supplying sleepers to what is called the Central Line; a line that is to run, and will very soon be running, to Querétaro and onwards; and which, by the way, cannot fail to develop the traffic of the English line. Indeed, it should properly have fallen to the lot of the English company to make it. But, as is so often the case, seeing that the toil and the anxiety of making the first line had been endured by those who thus rendered this continuation easy and practicable, the Fates took very good care so to arrange their moral government of circumstances, political and otherwise, as to secure the prize for other hands. There is, no doubt, quite enough of this sort of proceeding in the world; but if it is highly offensive to those who suffer by it, it must be correspondingly agreeable to those who gain by it.

My friend was very friendly; and the first kind office he perf rmed was to show me the way to our London Bank of Mexico and South America, in search of that necessary metal which we all so need and love, but always so preach against.

The coin generally in use in Mexico is the heavy silver peso, worth four shillings, with its divisions into halves, and into quarters, or reales: these, again, have

their halves. As a rule, you leave the bankers weighted with bulky coin, as we used to do with the old five-franc pieces in Paris, years ago. But it must be credited to Mexico that such paper money as exists is still worth the full coin, in change. It is not of every country that this can be said.

At our bank I had the pleasure of shaking hands with our manager, Mr. I'Anson, whom a few years before I had greeted in Lima; and as he and his good wife, Mrs. I'Anson, opened house to me, and were of much help to me while in the capital, they must pay the penalty of my reminding them of it here. In the evening of the same day Captain Horton walked in with the doctor: and our American friend, Mr. West, immediately making friends with both, we made the best together of the two days which were at the captain's disposal, before he again left for Vera Cruz, to go on board for sailing on the 2nd of July.

The cathedral is always the first object (after the bankers, by the way), that one looks for in a city; and to the cathedral we went. Our long straight principal street called San Francisco No. 1 and No. 2, continuing into the Plateros No. 1 and No. 2, brought us into the large Plaza, where the great building stands, surrounded by no other buildings of any pretensions to distinction. This cathedral of Mexico in no way resembles our old Gothic structures in England. There is no doubt a singular charm connected with these; and I was much struck when travelling in

Norway two summers ago, to hear an American lady, of all people in the world, break forth in enthusiasm upon English cathedrals, while we were visiting the respectable old pile at Trondhejm. No; not the French cathedrals, she said, but the English; there was a grace and solemnity about them she did not find among the larger and more pretentious structures on the Continent; and in this her father concurred.

The cathedral at Mexico, which presents its chief façade towards the south, and not towards the west, is a large imposing Spanish building, of mixed architecture, dating from the reign of Charles V., by whom, and also in virtue of a bull by Pope Clement VII. in 1530, it was founded. Its two open structured campaniles present a height of two hundred feet, with the usual dome. Its length exceeds four hundred feet, and its breadth is two hundred feet. The point of the roof is some twenty-five feet less. It appears that the whole structure contains the parish church as well as the cathedral proper, viz., the Sagrario; and this is a well-known Spanish arrangement. You have to pass through a large interior from the front entrance before coming to the real cathedral, and might mistake this for the cathedral itself. Built into one of its sides is the famous old Mexican Calendar stone, the dimensions of which are given as of nearly twelve feet in diameter. Its age is marked as of several years before the Conquest; and having been buried after the overthrow of the original

THE AZTEC CALENDAR STONE.

temple by Cortés, it was accidentally dug up in 1790, and built into the wall of the cathedral, by order of the then Viceroy.

The interior is lofty and grand of its class, with an overwhelming chief altar in the centre, after Spanish fashion, the centre choir being railed in by heavy metal balustrades. There are also the usual minor altars, aisles, chapels, pictures, and fixtures; its confessionals are well attended, and, at the appointed days and hours, its congregations are very numerous and very Indian.

The cathedral is said to be erected on the very spot formerly occupied by the Aztec Teocalli, or Pyramidal Temple, which was of course destroyed by Cortés, as being dedicated to one of the Aztec gods of an impossible name, and, so far as Cortés was concerned, of equally impossible worship. Cortés followed the general rule of conquering nations; objecting to the gods of the conquered one, and introducing their own.

A very fine view of the city, the green flat plain, and the surrounding mountains is obtained from the roofing; nor should the ascent be omitted, as it affords an admirable opportunity of appreciating the whole city and its position.

We also visited the museum, where we saw certain pictures and certain antiquities. Among the latter was the famous Sacrificial Stone, used in those human sacrifices that have so often been described, and the

evidences of which are said to have so shocked Cortés and his followers. It was strange to look upon the mass in its present condition of an outdoor curiosity, and associate it with those repulsive rites celebrated by the Aztec priests, who, being savages in superstition, of course invented a savage religion and a savage god.

The eastern side of the Plaza is occupied by "El Palacio Nacional," and on the side in front of the cathedral stands "El Palacio Municipal." Palaces they must both be called by conventional phraseology, but they are both large commonplace buildings, though the arcades in front of the latter add much effect to it. The President of the Republic, of course, occupies the former, which also contains the senators' chamber. The latter building belongs to the corporation of Mexico. The Plaza is large, and in the front of the cathedral it is planted with trees of tolerably good size, but of no particular character. Under their shade, walks and gardens are laid out, with a pavilion in the middle, where, as usual, a military band from time to time plays, while the town's folk, particularly on Sundays, sit or walk about to listen and to talk; this vocal accompaniment by the audience not being in these cases quite so out of place, or so destructive of the music and trying to one's temper as it too often is at theatres and operas, where certain people come apparently only to gossip; and in drawing-rooms.

Near the cathedral is the celebrated Monte Piedad, or National Pledging Establishment. We were

curious to see this institution on account of the peculiar custom that has existed in Mexican families to deposit and obtain advances on their jewelry, subject to their capacity to redeem their property in that more propitious future which so very seldom comes. These are set out in glass cases along a large saloon, with all the prices of sale marked on them by the Direction; and many purchases are made from time to time of genuine articles at reasonable sums. The objects deposited extend to almost every thing in the shape of ornament and furniture; to carriages, saddles, bits and bridles; but the long front row is reserved for the jewelry. Of this class I believe my friends bought some small specimens, but nothing I saw tempted my own taste. This custom seems singular enough, but having been long publicly acknowledged in Mexico it is accepted as one of those approved in Mexican society. Society may, of course, make its own rules everywhere, and customs which are acknowledged in one country may appear strange in others, which can, in turn, astonish by some of their own. Of course, no names appear. After a certain period the objects are exposed to public auction.

In the Plaza there is a very goodly sight indeed for those who wish to move about: I mean the centre station of all the various tramways that run to the surrounding districts, and do great credit to Mexico. It did not, however, occur to us on our first day to

avail ourselves of these most convenient and most necessary modes of travelling; but Mexico city having very few objects indeed to attract the stranger, we took one of the two-horsed carriages called "Carruages de Lujo" (literally "carriages of luxury"), and drove out to the renowned Chapultepec. The luxury, however, we found must be sought in the tram-cars, for the sun shines down very hotly on the top of the carriage, which makes it anything but luxurious, and the streets and roads, even for that short distance, cannot but be called exceedingly bad for driving.

Chapultepec, said to mean "the grasshopper's hill," is, as many of us know, closely connected with Mexican history. It was the royal residence of Montezuma when Cortés arrived, and vast descriptions have been indulged in as to its then magnificence. To-day the buildings at the summit of the mount present a broken and incongruous mass, consisting of old remains, and more recent unfinished additions, particularly those in which Maximilian, intending to make for himself a palace there, laid out a good deal of money, but with very little taste. He was very fond of Chapultepec, and was often to be seen walking in the gardens; and it was in the grand saloon that he gave his last great entertainment on that fatal return from Orizaba to Querétaro. This feast has been called by those who have regarded him with the greatest bitterness "The Feast of Belshazzar." The buildings are now devoted to the National Observatory. The ascent

CHAPULTEPEC.

to the palace and the form of the mount are very irregular, but the view from the somewhat fanciful terrace of Maximilian is exceedingly extensive and imposing. It comprehends, of course, the city of Mexico, which looks very well in the distance, with its cathedral and its many churches—objects, these, which always give character to the view of a city; and it comprehends also the whole valley of Mexico, with its folding mountain border, amidst which rise the two grand snow mountains, Popocatapetl and Iztaccihuatl.

In this view, however, it must be borne in mind that the valleys in sight are perfectly flat; they do not present those charming undulations, with all their light and shade, that we associate with the word valleys; add to this that a vertical sun throws the most unpicturesque possible light. Herein lies the magic of the effects of the light of a morning and evening sun; the shadows slope; and I have always thought that one of the causes of the superiority of the evening shadows to those of the morning lies in this fact, that the morning shadows are always decreasing, while those of the evening are always increasing. I remember some few years ago, making a winter's foot journey over the great St. Bernard with a friend, in the month of February; and we were both much struck by the singular beauty of the Val d'Aosta, as we sledged down towards that town after our walking excursion. It was presently explained

to us by our remembering that the winter sun was so low that it cast the sloping evening shadows, as it were, all day long.

The grandeur of the two mountains, the Peak of Orizaba not being visible here, is undeniable; their height is so great that they seem to tower into the sky; yet it is curious to reflect that they do not present the same height above the valley of Mexico, as does Mont Blanc above the valley of Chamounix, as the figures will show. Mont Blanc, for example, rises 15,784 feet above the sea, thus leaving him 12,284 feet above the valley, which stands at 3500 feet high; whereas Popocatapetl, the highest of the two Mexican mountains, though rising to as many as 17,726 feet, stands at only 10,326 feet above the valley, which is close upon 7400 feet high. But the grand effect of them in the view is caused by their being the only two in the whole range that can show anything approaching these heights, and the only two whose aspiring crests are silvered with eternal snow.

As regards the shape of these mountains which stand side by side, Iztaccihuatl presents by far the finer, because it is of a far more varied and serrated outline, while Popocatapetl presents a mere perfect and obtuse cone-shaped head. He is, therefore, naturally by far the easier of the two to ascend. I was told that sulphur is still extracted from his crater, calling to mind the astonishing and imaginary description that Prescott gives us of what the Spaniards, under Cortés,

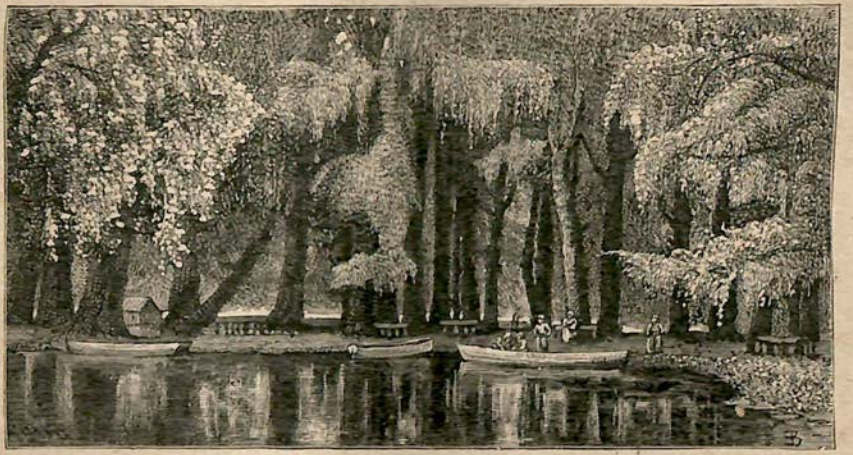
suffered and achieved in their ascent of the mountain and descent into the crater in search of this product for their powder. The ascent of Popocatapetl is purely a question of fatigue, and though the view from the summit may present a comparatively boundless view of fertility, and from that height must show great variety, comprehending both Mexico and Puebla, yet, among mountain views as seen from such an elevation, that afforded from Popocatapetl cannot stand very distinguished, considering the nature of the country round. I am calling to mind some of the Alpine views which even the Andes in all their glory cannot equal in the exquisite charm of their mountain variety. The great Sorata as I saw him from the range behind the lake of Titicaca, and Puno: Tupungato from Santiago; Aconcagua from above Valparaiso: the Misti behind Arequipa: Curapuna above it: all these giants, with their courts around them, will remember my obeisance to them, and forgive my preference to the Alps, for general romantic mountain beauty.

There are certain great dwellers at Chapultepec, however, which must not be forgotten among the mountains and the valleys, and all the more so that they are historical; I mean the aged and gigantic trees that lift their mighty forms at the foot of the mount. They are said to have been old when Montezuma walked among them. What their real name may be I cannot say, for they have more than

one attached to them. Their trunks and branches are enormous, some of the branches being almost trees of themselves. The trunks grow with the same sinewy irregularities as the yew, though much exaggerated, and both trunks and branches are covered thickly with what is called *barba española*, or Spanish beard, which hangs in hoary colour, long and thickly. Their leaf is small and feathery, resembling somewhat that of the acacia. Talking of the beard, I have seen many trees in Brazil covered with the same shaggy growth, which there is called "barba de velho," or old man's beard. But I have never seen such magnificent trees as these of Chapultepec anywhere else, and I must await my hoped-for visit to the Yosemite Valley to see still greater. I returned more than once during my stay in Mexico to stroll alone under these giant shades.

Through Chapultepec there runs the Spanish aqueduct, which carries water to the city from the mountains, and there is also a perfectly crystal fountain welling up among the trees which is conveyed separately for drinking purposes. I may here remark that, independently of these two sources of water, Mexico abounds in artesian wells.

When we returned to the city we all agreed as to the character of our drive of "luxury," nor were we very heartily regaled with the quality of our dinner in our darksome restaurant. The Concordia in the San Francisco will probably lead the way in



THE GREAT TREES AT CHAPULTEPEC.

improvement, but, as I have said before, the eating and drinking in Mexico is very poor.

"What a pity you left us, just now," said the captain to me, as I came back to them in the street, after five minutes' absence in a shop.

"Why?" asked I.

"An amusing incident just now occurred," he said. "An unruly fellow was arrested by that police-officer standing there, and flung himself down, and refused to move. The officer immediately pulled out his pistol, and held it to the fellow's ear, who got up instantly and was 'run in' by another."

True it is that this incident was amusing in its result; but the pointing of the pistol is not, in itself, a very recommendable police proceeding, nor was it, at the time, associated in my mind with what I afterwards saw several times complained of in the papers. They are my authority. Their complaint was that in the more or less remote districts a prisoner was actually allowed to run away, and thus incur the legal penalty, without further trouble, of being shot for attempting to escape. While I was in Mexico, an anecdote was current that a prisoner, on being handcuffed, had said, "Tie my legs too, for I don't want to be *tempted* into running away." How plainly such facts indicate a scattered population, without means of intercourse, and thus almost exempt from responsibility to the higher powers! And this is the mildest view to take of such things. I would

here farther observe that, in Mexico, shooting is the usual mode of inflicting capital punishment on all criminals condemned to death. The Mexicans have a horror of our halter; nor do they less revolt from the bloodshed of the guillotine.

On the following day we visited the church at Guadalupe, which owes its origin to a mysterious appearance of the Virgin Mary, and to which wondrous legends as good as any others are attached. The Virgin is said to have miraculously appeared on the 12th of December, 1531, and, accordingly, on the anniversary of that day numerous tribes of Indians, all dressed out according to their several tribal costumes, crowd into Mexico and perform their pilgrimages to Guadalupe. I have been told by an eye-witness that he has seen the whole length of the San Francisco and the Plateros completely filled. This length is more than half a mile. I regret much not having witnessed this scene. I should have been able to compare it with a wondrous pilgrimage I saw at Treves, in 1844, when thousands and thousands of pilgrims poured daily into that ancient city, from nearly every European country, to worship the "Holy Coat," or the vesture of the Crucifixion. The power of Pilgrimage to celebrate Miracle, all over the world, is, of itself, miraculous! A great deal of time is also wasted in small pilgrimages to the spot, on the 12th of every month. A sailor has added a peculiarity to the building by erecting a stone *ex voto*

ship, sail and all, in commemoration of his escape from shipwreck. Below the Virgin's figure there also hangs a hat, reputed to have belonged to a workman, who, while engaged in the building of the church, fell from the scaffold, and was miraculously caught in the air, and thus saved. The poor man who fell from Somerset House, on a similar occasion, was not so favoured. Only his watch was suspended on a chance hook, as he fell. The watch was removed for a mock dial, only lately displaced. How many hats may have succeeded one another at Guadalupe is impossible of solution. The church stands on a hill, whence an extensive view is obtained.

We made this journey by tramway. These tramways all offer a remarkably well-conducted mode of conveyance, in which mules are used; and (as I shall presently say again) they must, with railways, be the roads of the country. In the evening, having again somewhat meanly dined in a dark sala, the captain and the doctor left to join the steamer at Vera Cruz, and my American friend leaving early the next morning, I was again alone.

But on my return from Guadalupe I found Mr. Jackson's card, and on the next morning I had a long and interesting conversation with him, in which he proposed I should accompany his brother as far as Puebla, whither that inspector of the line on that "length" was going in a few days on business. Nothing could better chime in with my wishes, and

it was moreover that sort of visit over a line which I had some years ago become accustomed to. I also delivered my letters to Mr. Braneth, the resident director, and to Mr. Allsopp, who had been a resident of many years, as a merchant, at Tepic, which is situated among the mountains on the western coast near the port of San Blas, but who had lately come to live in the capital. I dare say this little entry of events may sound rather like that of a mere journal to my supposed readers, but I have the intention of registering for my own satisfaction the names of all who made my stay in Mexico profitable as well as pleasing.

It was upon this very night, the first of July, that the public ear was startled by a sudden piece of intelligence, said to have arrived by telegram from the States, conveying nothing less than that President Garfield had been assassinated. I remember when in San Paulo, in Brazil, the like effect of a corresponding telegram announcing the assassination of President Lincoln. In Mexico, as is often the case in other places, the shock of belief was followed by the reaction of disbelief; but, in the morning, the American flag was seen to be hoisted half-mast high at the Legation. Subsequently the news was modified, and succeeding telegrams ran their course until that fatal issue took place, which has roused such manifestations of sympathy from the courts of Europe, and from our own Queen especially.

But if this was reckoned bad news in Mexico,

how much more so was that of something else that had occurred close by, among the Mexicans themselves? I mean the fearful accident on the Morelos railway, by which hundreds, never really publicly counted, had fallen victims to ruins, water and fire. The accident had happened on the night of the twenty-third of June, but it was not till a few days afterwards that any professedly official account appeared in the papers. The first I read purported to have been sent to the ministry by an engineer, Señor D. Miguel Iglesias. Contradictions, rectifications, and recriminations followed in due order, as in like cases they are certain to do; but one great fact stood out in steady and horrible obstinacy; the hideous death of hundreds by hideous causes. The circumstances as first insisted on were striking and extraordinary.

Though the line in question is called the Morelos railway, it may be treated of as one of those most important projected enterprises which are looked forward to, as the great arteries of communication throughout the country, by whose well known powerful instrumentality Mexico's resources are to be developed and her people familiarized with the producing and consuming world. I believe the concession for making it is in the hands of General Grant. That, however, does not much matter. The line is intended to run from the capital in a south-west direction down to the port of Acapulco on the west coast, which port

Mr. Allsop informed me is, in its natural features, the best port in all Mexico. It will run through the City of Tixtla, on its way, and great importance is attached to the scheme, which it is generally admitted to deserve.

The section as far as Cautla had been constructed by Mexican engineers, and whether one had said it might be inaugurated, or another had said it was not yet safe, or whether new reports were made after the accident which ought to have been made before, I could not say even if I had read all the wranglings in the newspapers, which I really never did. One thing is certain, that on the twenty-third of June a sort of inauguration did take place as far as Cautla, at which two companies of the third regiment of the line were present. At five o'clock in the evening the train returned from Cautla, and on its way towards Mexico a storm of wind and rain, described in romance phraseology, overtook it. An engine was in front; then came seven long cars, and then an engine behind. Fear is said to have seized the conductor, who wished to return to Cautla; and when the train came to the bridge of Juan Antonio, which crossed a rapid stream, one of the drivers refused to go further. Then came the extraordinary statement that certain of the soldiers were deserting in the dark, and that one of the officers driven to desperation by this fact drew his pistol—a not unusual proceeding in parts of Mexico.

even by non-military individuals, nor one which the growing invasion of Americans seems very well calculated to unlearn them—and threatened the usual proceeding if the driver did not continue. This scene, curiously enough, is said to have taken place on the hinder and not the leading locomotive. Be this as it may, on went the train, and crash went the bridge; down went the first engine, and heaping and thundering one upon another, down went all the seven cars after it. All that remained safe was the hinder locomotive and the reported guilty officer, who, if the above account were true, ought to have been the only victim! But worse remains behind. In the last car there came several barrels of spirit, which falling on the fire of the shattered engine, immediately ignited all the shattered masses, and added amidst the struggling victims the yet more terrible death by flames.

The papers naturally and reasonably asked these questions:—If your bridge was properly built, how came it to give way on its very first trial by that rush of water which it was expressly constructed to withstand? And again, if by rush of water it was overthrown, how do you account for the fire having so much power over all the wounded and the ruins? Is it not the real truth that the bridge was very insufficiently put together?

These questions are now of much more importance for the future than for the past; for the railway to

Acapulco, if ever completed, cannot fail to be a grand artery for the country. And let this dreadful accident be a warning as regards its continuation. Railway construction through a difficult country cannot be undertaken under that idle word inspiration; and Morelos will long be a name in Mexico to illustrate the dire effects of inefficiency. This much I never heard contradicted, nor need I pretend to follow the engineers' controversies that ensued. At the same time it is to be admitted that Mexico boasts her school of mining and civil engineering.

The story of the conduct of the officer has not passed unchallenged, and his having been on the back engine, and not the front, has been held up as an assertion of the absurdity attaching to the tale altogether. On this particular point, before ending my story, I cannot omit to mention a form of contradiction put forth among the wits, which so thoroughly exemplifies the satirical vein among these races. It was impossible (it was said) that the officer in question could have so menaced the driver, for he had already been suspended for pawning his pistols.

CHAPTER IV.

PUEBLA AND CHOLULA.

VERY early on a fine clear morning in the month of July, on such a one as may be supposed to sparkle over a table-land standing at twice the height of our Snowdon, I was roused from a somewhat broken slumber with rapping at my door by that species of watching, open-eyed owl, called the night-porter; he who listens in the ghastly chilly silence of the night to the ticking of the clock, and the striking of those sepulchral hours when all should be dead and buried in sleep who really mean to rise again to life with open morning.

I was going to Puebla, and had scarcely dressed by candle-light, for in the low latitude of Mexico the early dawn is short, when a "carriage de lujo" came jingling down the silent street, and a first-rate railway servant appeared to take my luggage. I met my friend at the station, and we started, after a welcome hot cup of coffee.

On taking a better view of the approach to Mexico than I had been able to do on my first arrival, I

found that there exists a *Via Crucis* along the line, consisting of the seven stations and the sanctuarium, all built on a large scale, and at a rather long distance apart from each other. There is as much difference in the aspect of the Via Crucis seen in different countries, as there is in that of the Certosi or Chartreuse establishments. As an instance of the latter, compare the wooded beauties of the Grande Chartreuse in the bosom of the green mountains of Dauphiné with (say) Charter House Square; and as an instance of the former I could not but contrast this Mexican example along the flat sides of a railway with one I remember to have seen, some few years ago, leading up to the pilgrimage chapel of the Bom Jesus at Braga, in the north of Portugal. The carriage road on this spot winds up under a forest of trees, but the pilgrims' path lies up a wide zigzag flight of broad steps, offering a resting-place at each station, all of which are entirely overshadowed, while the view from the top over the surrounding country is sufficiently magnificent to divert the mind from its religious contemplations, or to increase that poetical feeling which is so essential an element in the sentiment of faith.

At twenty-seven miles from Mexico we stopped at the station of San Juan Teotihuacan, a name which is associated with its two famous Aztec earth-pyramids, both of which are plainly visible from the line, and to which my attention was now more par-

ticularly drawn by the circumstance of my being on my way to visit the yet more famous and extensive earth-pyramid of Cholula, near Puebla. That these two pyramids were dedicated to some special purposes belonging to the religion of the day there can exist no reasonable doubt, for internal structures of the *adobe* (or unburnt brick) and other like remains have been discovered in them ; but whether they were natural earth-mounds carefully improved and adapted, or whether they were wholly constructed for the purposes intended, must surely be a very open question. To the general observer the latter conclusion seems almost irresistible, and how any one can write, as has been written, that they remind one of the Egyptian structures is past my comprehension, except upon the natural supposition that erroneous drawings and descriptions have misled those who, though they have written on them, have never been near the spot. The pyramidal shape is, no doubt, remarkable. On this point, however, I have already said, elsewhere, that on visiting the Upper Nile so many natural pyramids appear among the mountains that one is led to believe the Egyptians copied their pyramids from nature. In Mexico, Popocatapetl was before the Aztecs ; a perfect pyramid ; and the pyramidal shape will appear upon the commonest act of throwing a barrowful of earth upon the ground.

The height of the largest of these pyramids is given as of one hundred and eighty feet, and the two

are said to have been severally dedicated to *Tonatiuh*, the sun, and *Meztli*, the moon. Both are much out of form and completely overgrown ; and Teotihuacan, —*the habitation of the gods*—once a flourishing capital, is now a mere paltry village. Hideous figures of Aztec gods are, of course, offered to the visitor, reminding one much more than do these earth-pyramids of Egypt and the everlasting nuisance of the Scarabæus. Warlike implements made of that black, glassy lava, called obsidian, have been from time to time found on the spot. The lovers of antiquity have here the same cause to fulminate against the antagonisms between old religions and new, which have given birth to the worst and most sacrilegious of iconoclasts; and the name against which they must write their black mark at Teotihuacan is the Spanish bishop, Zumarraga.

Another seven miles brought us to the now commonplace Otumba station—the word being a corruption of the real name Otompan. But this spot is famous in old associations for the great battle of the 8th of July, 1520, which was fought between the Spaniards and the natives—the Christians and the Idolaters. In the account of this battle, after reporting the speech of Cortés, wherein he speaks of "the arm of the Almighty being on their side," and of "His own good cause," the Castilian writers, *more sacro*, proceed to boast the number of the slaughtered at the figure of twenty thousand, adding that the army gave thanks to "The Lord of Hosts."

On reaching Ometusco station, at about forty-two miles from Mexico, the line, having up to that point run in a north-easterly direction, curves into a south-easterly one, and thus presents a view of the two great mountains on both sides, which change their relative positions. They are generally more often visible in winter than in summer, but they never could have appeared to greater advantage than they did this day. When we left Mexico they were covered ; but as the sun rose higher and higher their swan-down clouds began to break, and to disclose in openings that hard white surface of snow on rock which the eye that has ever seen snow mountains cannot mistake. Changing these ornaments into every varied form, they at last cast them off altogether ; so that when we reached Apizaco, where the branch to Puebla joins the main line, after passing the sheets of aloe, and the sour pulque barrels on the plains of Apam, they were rearing their bright white heads, pure and simple, against a Mexican blue sky.

After breakfasting at Apizaco station, which lies some eighty-six miles from Mexico, we took the train for Puebla, distant another twenty-nine miles. Puebla lies directly south of Apizaco and the line, passing what remains of the old historic city of Santa Anna, runs along the fringes of the vast picturesque mountain called Malintzi, or sometimes Malinchi. This was the name by which Montezuma always addressed Cortés. The height of Malintzi does not reach that

of perpetual snow in these latitudes, which is marked at about fourteen thousand three hundred feet above the sea, while that of the Alps is only, I believe, about eight thousand feet. Malintzi is marked at four thousand metres or thirteen thousand feet, and his height is said to coincide with the highest limit of the pine tree. He therefore shows no perpetual snow; but the grandeur of his ever-changing form, and the majestic manner in which he rises from his surrounding fertility and forests are undeniable.

Puebla, whose population is put down at seventy thousand, is sulphureous. The first thing therefore that one notes on entering the city is the smell of sulphur. It boasts its hot sulphur baths and its invalid visitors, and I am quite willing to believe that they are as virtuous (I mean the baths) as all others of that disagreeable nature; and here I include even that peculiar large pool at Leuker Bad, where I have seen old men sitting in the warm water all day long, drumming on the little square table which is hooped round their necks to prevent its swimming away from their rheumatic limbs.

We put up at the Hotel de las Diligencias, in the court-yard whereof I saw some specimens of that cumbrous family, a member of which was one day to take me from Mexico to Querétaro, and one of which, from among those below, I heard rumbling out with its nine mules at about three o'clock the next morning.

Puebla boasts a very fine cathedral and bishop's palace; it boasts also several churches. The cathedral is considered the finest in Mexico, and is handsomely adorned with the marbles that are taken from quarries near the city. There is also a very pleasant planted garden, in the bright sunshine of which, while sitting under shade, it is very entertaining to watch the people, in their various callings and costumes, passing to and fro. Puebla also boasts a good-sized plaza, one side of which displays a line of arcaded shops. In this plaza men and women sit upon the ground, under the shades of some very fine trees called fresno, a species of ash tree, and offer you their vegetables, fruits, and flowers. There is a curious old epigram attached to the people here, but with what justice I cannot say. Has it any reference to the character imputed to the neighbouring Cholulans of old, whose conduct towards Cortés was by him made the pretext for his conduct towards them? Here at all events is the proverb:—

> "Perico y Poblano,
> No les tocas con la mano."

which being interpreted saith:—

> "Parrot and Poblàn,
> Don't you touch 'em with your han'."

While Cholula is famed in the wars of the ancient invaders in 1520, Puebla is renowned in the wars of the modern invaders in 1867. For hither it was that General Marquez marched, instead of fulfilling the

mission he undertook from Querétaro, for Maximilian, whither he was to return, as expeditiously as possible, with what men and means he could gather together. He marched forth from Mexico to aid General Manoel Noriega, who was being besieged in Puebla by General Porfirio Dias. On hearing of this movement, however, General Porfirio Dias quickly assaulted and took the city, and marching onwards, eventually dispersed the army of Marquez. This person, after ordering all his artillery to be thrown into a gorge, abandoned his division, and fled into Mexico, almost alone, declaring that all was lost.

We dined and slept at the hotel, as well as we expected to do; but our table was more prettily placed than furnished, standing in the open corridor of the first floor under hanging plants and flowers. Several different birds in cages were round us, and some were singing. Among these I noticed a red bird, red all over, in its sparrow beak as well as feathers. This they called a cardinal, and it is the bird generally depicted in ornithography under that name. But the cardinals of the River Plate, some of which I have now and then brought home with me, and two of which are now in full song near Uckfield and at Eastbourne, are of a totally different kind. Their breasts are white, and their backs are slate-coloured; their throat being adorned with a most brilliant patch of scarlet, and their heads with a bristling topknot of the same colour—whence their name. It may be worth

knowing to some one, that unless these Mexican birds have been brought up in a cage, or have been caged as fledglings, they will not bear the voyage to England. Puebla being justly celebrated, as I have intimated, for its marbles, various worked specimens always appear for sale, but in poor taste. I should especially notice a large cotton factory, on which manufacture I shall have more to say by-and-by.

On a fine morning we started for Cholula, and its great pyramid. It lies a few leagues to the west of Puebla across the river Atoyac, which, after watering these fertile plains, runs towards the Pacific Ocean, discharging itself there under the name of the Zacatuca. An admirable line of rails has been laid down, on which tramcars are run, performing the pleasant journey in about an hour; but the works are constructed well enough to bear a locomotive, as appears from their solidity and the curves at which they are set out. Our only companions were a Poblan family, Dr. Marin with his wife and daughter, who treated us in a manner which did not recall the epigram. That easy graceful address, so characteristic of most foreigners, served immediately to open a conversation with my friend and myself, and very soon led to an invitation to breakfast with them at Cholula. They were going, they told us, to spend the day there, like ourselves, and were bound to the hacienda of a friend, taking their day's provisions with them, as the family were not living there.

Cholula, they told us, was a very poor place indeed, as indeed it is, and that we should get nothing there fit to eat. It also happened that the daughter was learning English, of which the father already knew some few words and short sentences; and this (I may say in passing) was one of many examples I observed of how much the influx of Americans has made it necessary to learn something of that language which is to accompany new life and money into the country. They parted with us at the corner of a wide grass road, leading up to the hacienda, just short of Cholula, and we were to be with them at one o'clock.

Cholula and Puebla appear to have changed their ancient conditions with one another, judging from the old accounts of the two cities. While Cortés found Puebla a mere insignificant village, on the site of which the present important Mexican city was founded by the Spaniards, he is said to have found Cholula, the great commercial emporium of the plain, and its inhabitants excelling in various mechanical arts, and producing a very fine class of porcelain. They also worked in cotton, of which fibre, by the way, one hears in the very first days of the discovery of Mexico, Montezuma having made handsome presents of gold and cotton cloths to Cortés; and of this species of manufacture there must presently bud forth a vast production throughout the country. The Cholulans, indeed, are represented as having been

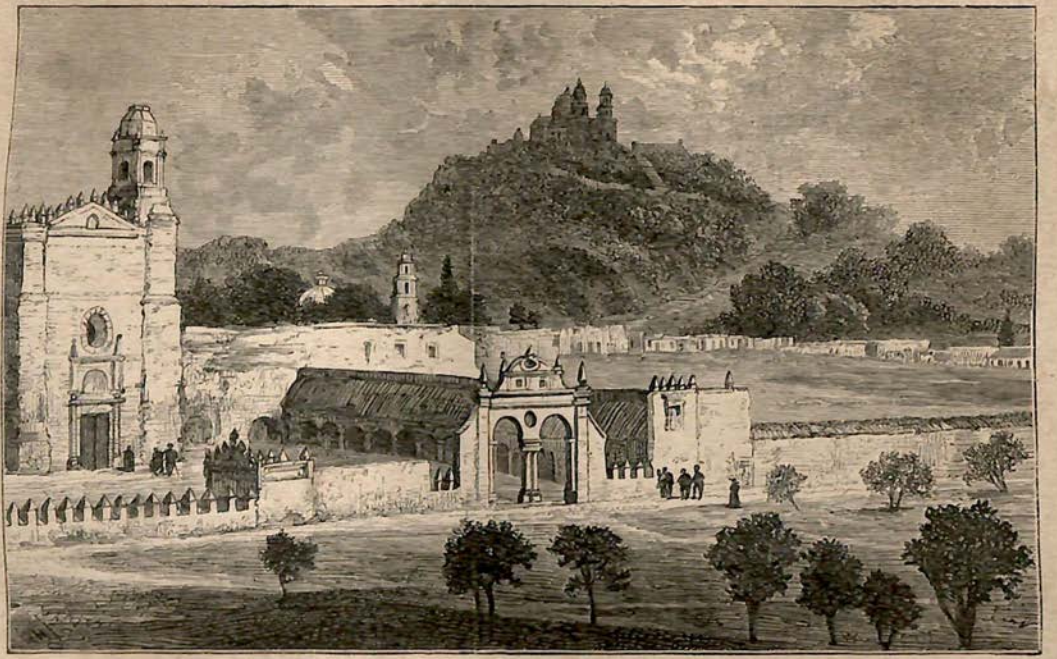
the Sybarites of Mexico, though there is no notice, by the way, of their ever having displayed the original hardiness of that people, who became afterwards a by-word for effeminacy in Italy.

Nor was this all, as their great earth-pyramid evidences. Cholula was even more famous as a religious city than as a commercial one. Here the god called Quetzalcoatl is said to have paused on his passage to the coast, teaching the people; here they worshipped him; and hither came pilgrims from all parts, rich as well as poor, to swell the processions that attended a wealthy and numerous priesthood. Cholula, indeed, has been styled the Mecca of the Aztecs; the Holy City of Anahuac; and one leading article of faith pertaining to this god's worship deserves remembering, as akin to that of some others, including our own, viz., he was one day to return and resume full dominion over the land.

We visited, and of course mounted, the great pyramid of Cholula, from the top of which there at once burst upon the view a prospect which might well indeed serve to relieve the mind from reflecting on those religious horrors, the human sacrifices, which connect it with the worship of Quetzalcoatl, and with the later and perhaps better authenticated historical horrors which connect it with Cortés, and the planting of the Cross. To the left, as we faced the north, rose the two great snow mountains near Mexico, seen in flank; close on the north-east was Malintzi, with

all his crags and forests, and farther off in the east rose the mighty Peak of Orizaba. Lesser mountains encircled us at a greater distance, and spreading leagues of laughing fertility carpeted the comparatively boundless plains.

The earth-pyramid, as it at present stands, is, as a pyramid, "*informe, ingens,*" although no other name can even now be given it than pyramid; and the only just representation that I have seen of its present shapeless shape appears in "Our Sister Republic," by Col. Evans of San Francisco. It is truncated, and in that form its perpendicular height is given as only of one hundred and seventy-seven feet. At the top, the platform is said to comprise more than an acre, and is occupied by a devotional Christian church; hideous outside, but handsomely adorned, after church fashion, within. It may fairly be said that you may wander and scramble about the broken outline of this pyramid, among the trees and brambles, and even the cultivated patches that its unequal sides present. Over these sides, moreover, it is claimed that there can be plainly discovered the traces of those ascending terraces which characterized the Teocallis, or temples of the Aztecs, round which the priests, here as elsewhere, used to wind with their processions, to celebrate their hideous human sacrifices in the temple which stood on the flat summit. Hence, the present church of the new religion, now here standing, must be taken as historically superseding the broken altars of the old.



EARTH PYRAMID OF CHOLULA.

I will not say that there are not traces of old ascending terraces, but it must require a very experienced eye in these matters to enable a writer to descant positively upon the fact. No doubt, the present approaches to the church would naturally have followed, to a certain extent, the old lines. Additional evidence of the pyramid itself having been devoted to some special solemn purposes has been also afforded by the laying open, as in the case of the two earth pyramids of San Juan Teotihuacan, of subterranean walls and passages of brick and stone. The four sides at the base are stated to face, or (speaking more safely) to have faced, the four cardinal points of the compass, and the length of one of them is given as of one thousand four hundred and twenty-three feet; about twice as long, that is, as that of the great pyramid of Cheops; but how this is measured I cannot say. Round the base of Cheops I have walked; there can be no difficulty about outline there; and taking the medium between the measurements of Sir G. Wilkinson and Col. H. Vyse, these sides may be stated at seven hundred and sixty feet each; but I could not pretend to find the way of walking round Cholula. Nevertheless, the length of the sides being assumed, the area must follow; and whereas that of Cheops is given by Col. Vyse at very nearly thirteen acres, that of Cholula is stated at no less than forty-four acres. Such is this great earth-pyramid of Cholula; and if some of our learned and ingenious

investigators who have written so profoundly upon the great pyramid of Cheops, in Egypt, Professor Piazzi Smith, for example, are tempted some day to investigate the mysteries of the great pyramid of Quetzalcoatl at Cholula, we shall all be as charmed and puzzled by their recondite lucubrations in reference to the West, as we have been by those with which they have favoured us in reference to the East.

While speaking on this subject, it is impossible to overlook Mr. Proctor's most interesting astronomical calculations, connected with the Precession of the Equinoxes, whereby the age of the Great Pyramid of Cheops may be with tolerable exactness calculated as of 3350 years B.C.

As regards the peculiar religious rites that were performed on the pyramid at Cholúla, there appears no ground for refusing to believe that human sacrifices were abundant. Comparing modern religions with old, it might be said, perhaps, that as the latter destroyed the body the former are apt to condemn the soul; but we need not discuss that question here. What appears certain is, that the older the worship, as a general rule, the more savage it was; the more savage the mind was, the more savage was the interpreted nature of the god whom the mind had created and was reflecting from itself. Hence the horrors of human sacrifice; horrors, that is to say, to more advanced and less harsh minds; who now, being milder themselves, interpret their God as of a milder nature

also, and are unable to imagine so bloodthirsty a Fetish as was reflected from the more barbarous natures. Assuredly, mankind might well set themselves to examine how much of worship has sprung, and springs even to-day, from the sycophancy of fear.

And now that we are hearing all about this pyramid and the terrible rites for which it was made to serve, imagine yourself upon the truncated top, at the time of the Spanish invasion of 1519, and that you are standing, we will say, by the side of Cortés, a witness of the crowded pilgrimages which he recounts. By-and-by you shall behold other slaughter, hideous slaughter, and in the name, not of "the God of the air" but in the name of the Cross. You shall behold and you shall hear, in the words of Prescott, "the incessant rattle of musketry and the crash of falling timbers, which sent up a volume of flame that outshone the ruddy light of morning, making altogether a hideous confusion of sights and sounds that converted the holy city into a pandemonium." Rapine and murder went hunting in couples. And thus these horrors came to pass over that now almost deserted spot we were visiting, the interest in which, except for its pyramid, consists alone in its ancient tragical history.

Cortés was on his march to Mexico, whither he had been invited, and again not invited, by the vacillating Montezuma. Montezuma had recommended him to take the road through Cholula, against which

the Tlascalans, whom Cortés had vanquished and joined forces with, warned their conqueror friend. On entering the city, the Spaniards had been received in a most friendly manner by the Cholulans, under the orders of the emperor; but having consulted his oracles anew,

"Heu! vatum ignaræ mentes,"

they had told him that Cholula was to be the grave of his enemies.

Then Montezuma's orders were reversed from Mexico, and the bearing of the Cholulans was of course reversed also. The Spaniards were to be entrapped and destroyed. This intended treachery was detected in time through the instrumentality of Marina, the famous female interpreter with a romantic history, who always accompanied Cortés, having been given to him as a slave by the Tabascan chiefs, although she herself was the daughter of a rich and powerful cacique. Thereupon Cortés determined not only on severe measures, but on a revenge, intended, and assuredly well qualified, to terrify all future opponents. Having charged the caciques with perfidy, they threw the blame, where he must have known it properly lay, on Montezuma; but on this, he feigned great indignation on behalf of that monarch, and dismissed them with harshness, for he was desirous of keeping on terms with Montezuma. He laid out his schemes for a general carnage; and having marched the large levies, with which the caciques had appeared, into

the great square, he declared before all that he would make such an example of them as would ring through all Anahuac. Then follows the description of this example, which I will give in the words of Prescott. "The fatal signal, the discharge of an arquebuse, was thus given. In an instant every musket and cross-bow was levelled at the unfortunate Cholulans in the courtyard, and a frightful volley poured into them as they stood crowded together like a herd of deer in the centre. They were taken by surprise, for they had not heard the preceding dialogue with the chiefs. They made scarcely any resistance to the Spaniards, who followed up the discharge of their pieces by rushing on them with their swords; and, as the half-naked bodies of the natives afforded no protection, they hewed them down with as much ease as the reaper mows down the ripe corn in harvest-time."

Further details are needless: outside the city were some two thousand of Tlascalans, mortal enemies of the Cholulans, and they, at a concerted signal, joined their forces and augmented the carnage. These scenes had lasted some hours, when Cortés, at the request of Montezuma's envoys and in deference to their wishes, diplomatically consented to order a cessation of the horrors.

This is all terrible. But could not Cortés find what is deemed high authority for his invasion and for the fearful courses to which he was driven to ensure

success? Like his soldiers, the Hebrews, long ago, were similarly led into what they were told was their promised land, and fire and sword were the word of command against all the possessors whom they encountered, and who worshipped their God by another name than that of Jehovah. Of Joshua, alone, it is written that in seven years he had subdued thirty-one kings or petty princes that ruled over the nations of Canaan; and the general modes of subduing conquered races under him, and under others after him, are recorded in pages that millions reverence as inspired.

But, as to this last paragraph, perhaps some one may remark that the allusion it contains relates to "sacred history," with which and "profane history" no comparisons can be made. For the life of me I never could understand this division of the world's history. I never could understand how the world could have two separate kinds of history, judged of, and believed in, by two separate kinds of rules. I can understand the religious history of any given people—that is to say, the history of their religion, as of their poetry, music, or painting; but beyond that limit I cannot understand a sacred history. If I am wrong, it remains for me to be enlightened.

I remember one day, while under the shadow of the great Misti at Arequipa, taking down a book from the shelves in my room, and by chance lighting on the following extract from Bishop Butler, which was printed on the title page, and which so completely

chimed in with my manner of thinking on this subject, that I copied it out as follows:

"The general design of Scripture," writes the author of the Analogy, "considered as historical, may be said to be, to give us an account of the world in this simple view—as God's world; by which it appears essentially distinguished from all other books." This is a very striking observation, and seems to me to convey more, perhaps, than Bishop Butler contemplated at the moment he wrote it. If there is one great guiding Power over all the world, then it must guide all things equally, and always: and we know that to-day we are continually hearing of "the finger of Providence" when any striking circumstance comes to pass. Why, then, should not all our own history be written in the language of the Bible? If not so, what authority could the authors of the books of the Bible have for their form of writing? for attaching a peculiarity to their own records, not allowed to others, and for using the name of their God as the immediate actor?

Catching the colouring thus given, people speak of sacred characters, of sacred kings, and holy lands; and all things that take place within the scope of such records are claimed to be exempt from those common views with which these same claimants insist that we shall regard all other records. Take any great event in history and write it in the language of the Bible, as happening in "God's world." Why not so? Not only has everybody who believes in a

universal guide, in a Ruler of the Spirits, an equal right to do so, but, especially, under Bishop Butler's view he is bound to do so. He is, under that authority, bound to treat of events in the world as events in "God's world." But a mischief lurks herein: that all sides may use the same language, one against another; and this consideration shows that the question is not a mere vain and fanciful one. The assumption of the authority to use the name of a deity lends a sanction to deeds which such a deity as any manly mind could worship would repudiate and abhor. And hence the phraseology in question may become actually demoralizing and pernicious.

Here is Cortés before us as an example! And, what is much nearer to us, here is Maximilian. He lands at Vera Cruz, and boldly says that the Almighty has sent him there. But when the result of his coming is complete, his enemies might with more obvious right paraphrase the history of Ahab. "I saw all Israel scattered upon the hills, as sheep that have not a shepherd." Everybody claims the right to use the name of God as guiding his acts, because this phraseology has been once received as sacred. Take again Tamerlane and the siege of Aleppo. Blood and rapine were raging through the city, which presented something like the scenes at Cholula. But a theological conference was going on at the same moment, and he addresses the doctors thus:—"You see me here a poor, lame, decrepid mortal. Yet by my arm has

the Almighty been pleased to subdue the kingdoms of Iran, Touran, and the Indies. I am not a man of blood, and God is my witness that in all my wars I have never been the aggressor, and that my enemies have always been the authors of their own calamity." "During this peaceful conversation," writes Gibbon, "the streets of Aleppo streamed with blood, and re-echoed with the cries of mothers and children, with the shrieks of violated virgins." Again he writes, "The cruelty of the soldiers was enforced by the peremptory command of producing an adequate number of heads, which, according to custom, were curiously piled in columns and pyramids." Yet Tamerlane speaks of his world as "God's world." But, in good truth, no special sanction for any act, since the world began, can be obtained by the assumption of a special language in recording it.

All invaders and conquerors, be they who they may, have been and must be unscrupulous; and have asserted a mission from a mighty power, and in almost all cases arbitrated miracle to attest their right. If all history may not be written in the language of the Bible, as belonging to "God's world," then the writers of the books of the Bible have no right to the special language they have arbitrated for their own people's acts; and Joshua had no higher authority for making use of the treachery of the woman Rahab, to devote to "utter destruction" the city of Jericho, in order to plant

the Hebrews, attributing so savage a command to a direct order from his God, than had Cortés, in profiting by the treachery of Doña Marina, to spread fire and carnage through Cholula, in the prosecution of his asserted call to plant the Cross.

But we will now leave our earth-pyramid and the solitary Cholula, with its one great cathedral church, that seems singularly disproportioned to its surroundings, and we will join our good friends at the hacienda. We found them quite ready to receive us with all the courtesies of hospitality but with none of those of formality; and how often and often have I experienced the same pleasing treatment among the Fazendeiros of Brazil:—

"Soyez simple avec art,
. . . . . agréable sans fard."

After our entertainment we lounged about, and shot at a mark with pistols; and then we wandered through the vast fertilities of maize with all that feeling of liberty, and of possession of all around, with which these hacienda modes of life inspire us to recall one of the finest lines that were ever written in English poetry:—

"Creation's heir, the world, the world, is mine!"

As we had all arrived, so we all returned; we joined the tramcar at the corner of the green road, and trotted into Puebla in a pouring tropical rain. The next morning shone in compensation, and my

friend and I took the train back to Mexico, where, after passing again under the great Malintzi, and running through the leagues of aloes and the sour pulque barrels of Apam, we arrived in safety and contentment.

CHAPTER V.

FURTHER DAYS IN MEXICO.

IN one important respect I prefer Puebla, with its population of seventy thousand, to Mexico city with its population of some two hundred and sixty thousand. Not that, taking all things into consideration, I would rather live in the latter city, but that I prefer both its situation and its air. Puebla is built upon uneven ground, so that there is a chance of drainage; and in a more open position, so that there is much more ventilation. Water runs through the streets and runs away. Mexico, the capital city, concerning which it is perhaps now time that I should speak with more detail (having gradually become more familiar with it), surprised me at first by its aspect and its position. I may candidly say that it disappointed me as to both.

It must have frequently happened to many of us that, when our interest has been excited with regard to any spot or person long before we have witnessed the reality, we have at last drawn so fixed a picture of the object in our imagination that the preconceived figure refuses to be displaced by

the real one when seen, and there exists a species of contest between the two. I remember this happening to me in the case of the city of Arequipa in Peru, which I had imagined from its height above the sea must be a hanging craggy city. But I found it built upon a perfectly flat plain, though close among the mountains.

I may say the same as regards Mexico city, the height of which, by the way, almost equals that of Arequipa. Nor were there wanting in this case early impressions of beauty, and even of grandeur, arising from exaggerated writings. In the reality, though lying within and very near the crown of a wide oval formed by mountains more or less distant—the two chief, Popocatapetl and Iztaccihuatl, being (as I have said) the only two snow-capped—the valley of Mexico is as flat and as green as a billiard table, and the city is, of course, as flat as the valley. But the position of Arequipa, to which I have referred, though also lying on a plain, is far and far finer as regards grand scenery than that of Mexico, albeit the city and the valley of Quilca are as nothing compared with the city and the abounding valley of Mexico. Arequipa may be said to lie quite among the mountains. On approaching it by railway, you run zig-zagging among the rocks with the Quica rushing down in a gorge below you, through the brown sterility, fringed on both sides with a green ribbon of fertility; while in front lies the city, closely backed by the snow-covered

cone of the Misti, with his nineteen thousand feet of height above the sea, and the spreading Chicaña and Pichu-Pichu handsomely flanking him on either side.

Now the approach to Mexico by the railway, though its cathedral and eighteen parish churches in the distance look well, is really very poor, and the very opposite of imposing. For there are no overhanging mountains; the plain though fertile is damp and even marshy; and the outskirts through which the railway runs present mere scattered buildings of mean and unengaging aspect. Nor is the city itself qualified to make any boast whatever of general architectural beauty. The streets are long, and generally wide; but the houses, though built of good stone, are, for the most part, flat and monotonous, and are rarely of more than two storeys high. All are built in the cubic, or flat-roofed, form, and in what are called quadras, or squares; the streets running at right angles to one another, as is the case in the example nearer home, of Turin. As from the flatness of the position there is at present little or no chance of drainage, its ground is moist and sodden. I have heard this compared to a thick pudding crust: and it is most certain that, in spite of the brilliant atmosphere that must be breathed at such a height, malaria often exists throughout the city, and the mortality rate is high. The ground floors of many of the houses are damp. In some cases, indeed, houses have gradually sunk down, so that what

was the ground floor has turned itself into an under floor; and in some of the best built houses—I will take the property of the London Bank of Mexico and South America as an example, which is a strong cube building in a good part of the city—the moisture oozes through the stone pavement of the manager's room. I have seen, moreover, one or two church towers that may serve to remind one of the graceful campanile of Pisa, though only in one respect: they lean from the upright. Nor is the city much improved by the vicinity of the four lakes, of which that of Tezcoco is the largest and the nearest, lying almost on a level with the plaza; nor again, are the neighbouring meadows an advantage, being in many places marshy, though productive. In the days of Montezuma Mexico was, in fact, a water city; he humbly spoke to Cortés about his *insular* position, and, whatever may be said or sung of them, positions of this kind sound far more pleasantly in description than they prove to be in reality. Mexico was formerly a species of Venice, but without the sea water; and to-day it is a Venice dried off.

This brings me to speak of what were called the "chenampas," or floating gardens, lying along the canal of the Viga, which connects Mexico with one of the lakes. These gardens no longer float, but have become fixed to the ground. All romance upon the subject of them is as surely dead as Montezuma. But let me record for them a few lines from Prescott

who is supposing the Spaniards' first view of them: "Here they beheld those fairy islands of flowers, overshadowed occasionally by trees of considerable size, rising and falling with the gentle undulation of the billows." I cannot but suspect that many would rather read thus of them than paddle about among them. Their construction is supposed to have been first suggested to the Indians by the separation of masses of earth from the shores, but which were still held together by roots. In endeavouring to keep these together by artificial means the next step would naturally be developed into making new and independent frame works from any fitting materials, and filling them with earth or the bottoms of the shallow waters.

Fruits, vegetables and flowers, are grown here and sold in Mexico at good profit. Whether the pursuit is healthy I do not know, but the produce is good. As regards the flowers, I can truly say that even in Paris and Rome I have never seen any more beautiful, or nosegays, great and small, more beautifully made. They are highly artistical, and nothing but a love for flowers could inspire their production. The market place for these flowers stands in the Plaza of the cathedral. It is an open building, of pillars and roof only, and of a parallelogram form and not large. But the sight and the scent of its stalls on a fine fresh morning might fairly be called enchanting.

Nor are the fruits insignificant. Among those

sold at this market I will first mention the familiar strawberry. This plant flourishes and yields abundantly in the neighbourhood of Mexico, and the fruit is cheap and most excellent. The tuna, or fruit of the cactus, sometimes purple as well as green (clumsily called by us the prickly pear), also appears in baskets kept by squatting women on the steps of this market place. It is as cheap as walnuts in England, and very refreshing and very wholesome. But this fruit is generally sold by women squatting in different parts of the side streets, and very often at the door of their small dwellings, where the inside folk are employed in making tortillas, also often sold with the tunas, and wrapped in napkins to keep them more or less warm! What are tortillas? They are found at almost every one's breakfast table, and in their plainest form are a standard food for the Indians. No cook's oracle need be consulted for their making, as you will see if you look inside the door. The materials are simply maize flour and water, of which a dough is made; then this is sometimes rolled out and sometimes not; but the great and final operation is conducted with the palms of the hands. The dough or paste is smacked off one palm on to the other alternately several times, until the substance presents a small cold pan-cake of flour and not of batter. It is then baked and eaten flabby. All classes are very fond of these things; and at private houses they are spread with butter, and some-

times baked with some of it into the crispness of biscuits.

A very fine fruit in Mexico is the mango, the Manilla mango, which is totally free from fibre, and is almost of the consistency of a peach. They, also, are abundant. I had never eaten of these before, though I had often eaten mangoes and very fine ones in Brazil, where they are called mangas, from the tree mangeira, for in Portuguese the gender of the fruit always follows the gender of the tree.

The flavour of the Mexican mango is extremely delicate, resembling that of the very refined scent of a violet. This also should be more or less the flavour of the fibrous mango, but there is always a fuller one in these, sometimes degenerating into that of turpentine. From this and another fact which I have experienced I have come to my own conclusion that the delicate scent of the violet is something akin to an infinitesimal exhibition of turpentine.

I need scarcely mention the overwhelming banana, with his majestic blades of leaves; and whose imported fruit is so insulted by being exhibited on our English dessert tables in the ugly colours of a convalescent prize fighter. Apples and oranges abound, and are good, as are other fruits belonging to the country.

I must not, however, omit to mention the aguacáte; a very delicate semi-vegetable fruit, sometimes purple and sometimes green, as the tuna is. It is something

of the shape of a pear, though not so much so in Mexico as I have seen it in the Cape Verdes and South America. It has one large round stone in the middle, and its contents are of a substance like butter, with a very delicate nutty flavour. It is eaten in various ways; sometimes even in soup. In Portuguese (in which language I fancy it was first known to our sailors) it is called abacate; and this word not exactly suiting a mouth with a quid in it, and the shape of the fruit being familiar, our tars of the olden time jumbled the whole name into "alligator pear," which the learned have adopted.

"What would you call it, then?" said a passenger on board, who did not like to be disturbed out of what he had called it for years.

Now that is a very dangerous sort of side issue to fall into in any serious argument.

"I would call it by its proper name," I replied.

"But who's to twist one's mouth into it? Alligator pear will do as well as anything else."

"Well, then," said another, "anything else again will do, and I'll call it 'crocodile apple.'"

One of these names is, certainly, just as good as the other; but to the end of the world "alligator pear" will represent aguacate, or abacate.

The papers, and particularly *El Monitor Republicano*, which, by-the-by, is an admirable Mexican journal, are continually calling attention to the state of the streets, after rain, some of which, while I was

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there, I saw completely flooded. This, indeed, I have seen in Rio de Janeiro and San Paulo, where (as I used to joke with them), while the people were thirsting for water which they thus allowed to run to waste and wet their feet, they complained that their tongues were dry and parched. But in Brazil, at all events, better things are close at hand ; for that country is altogether fast advancing into important activity and large water-works are in course of construction.

Under date of 15th July, 1881, there appeared in the *Monitor Republicano*, and in the course of their leading article, several sentences in reference to the state of the streets which I translate :

"Only a few days ago a coach stuck in the mud in the Puente de Palacio, that is to say close to the corner of the Palacio Municipal—Town Hall." . . . "All the streets may be said to be, without exception, covered with mud." . . . "The square of the Candelaria which the railway trains cross is a perfect lake ; the church seems to be on an island."

With all this as true, however, as regards Mexico, it is by no means a city of very offensive smells ; by no means such a one, for example, as we all remember Edinburgh at home, and Cologne abroad, to have been ; this last being famed for having produced the well-known epigram of Coleridge and, doubtless, goaded ingenuity into the invention of its unrivalled scent. But Mexico is all the more dangerous on this account ; for the unwholesome odours are insidious.

Now and then you will catch one, which discharges its vile venom with sufficient volume to bid you fly; but in general, you are not more than conscious of a certain unpleasant sourness in the air, betokening stagnation of decomposing matter. My room was on the first floor at the Iturbide hotel, and was tolerably pure; but I never passed through the corridor leading to it, without more or less of discomfort, while the broad entrance from the street, and much of the ground floor, were invariably offensive.

But then there are the bright sparkling heavens above to appeal to, if only you can persuade the heavenly air to come low enough down to purify the earth. Yet even in this air, without for one moment hinting the absurdity that it can be unwholesome, there is, nevertheless, something trying, for you are, in fact, living up at mountain height, and in a low latitude also, which gives great peculiarity to the atmosphere. I did not find any real oppression from its rarefaction, as some are said to do. I experienced nothing like what befell me at Puno, on the lake of Titicaca, some twelve thousand six hundred feet above the sea, when, on attempting to run, I fell against a wall, and was shouted to by the man I was endeavouring to come up with, "Hold, hold! you mustn't run." I suffered nothing like that which some experience even at Arequipa. But once or twice only, when mounting my stone staircase quickly, I did experience some tightness of the chest, and no more. Nevertheless,

the peculiar dryness and rarity of the air feed the blood through the lungs in an unusual form; not yielding the general class of nourishment. The nights, again, are somewhat treacherous, as you are not quite alive to their being very often cold and harsh, after the hot sunny day. I myself suffered a certain inconvenience from all this strange mixture of rarified air and bad drains, in the shape of tender glands, though not sore throat; also from a disagreeable sensation of heartburn, as we call it, and from an ill-tempered stomach, not mollified by the general class of food, and very much out of place (as I regretted often to feel), at tables where I ought to have been more gratefully responsive to hospitality. Such consolation as such an assurance could afford me I obtained, by being told that most new-comers suffered exactly in a similar manner; and I don't mind adding that I was not sorry to hear it. In confirmation of this particular charge against the city I must add that whenever I left Mexico the symptoms in question disappeared.

The drainage of the city was being talked of very seriously when I left—the *entubacion* as it is called—but there are two points connected with this process which influence some minds. It is said, that if you dry the naturally moist pudding crust, you will cause the very serious subsidence of many buildings from the shrinking of the soil. Again, that as it stands, it serves as a deadening protection against the shocks of earthquake, to which the city is from time to time subjected

and which this pudding crust, acting as a buffer, considerably mollifies. But it would be most unfortunate for Mexico should any real causes stand in the way of a thoroughly efficient drainage, for this improvement is indispensable. I was there in what is called the wet season, and no doubt the inhabitants suffer more from the present conditions of the city in the dry; for though there must be less evaporation at that period, yet the latitude of 20° is low enough to admit of much at all times. The climate, in itself, cannot possibly be bad. I noticed the great regularity with which the rain came on every day; always at about four o'clock in the afternoon; and my attention was more particularly called to this fact, from remembering what I used to hear about these afternoon rains in Rio. I have heard many people there, English as well as Brazilians, say that, up to the year 1850, when the scourge of yellow fever first appeared among them, the afternoon thunder storm in summer was as regular to its hour as the clock; and that engagements to ride or to walk out among the beautiful haunts of Tijuca, or elsewhere among the neighbouring beauties of the glorious bay, used to be arranged for before or after the thunder-storm; and that while this regularity in washing the air continued the dreaded disease was unknown. In 1850, it is asserted, the climate changed; the storm ceased to be regular, the atmosphere began to be impure, and yellow fever stalked in.

As regards the drainage of the city and valley of

Mexico, this was undertaken at an enormous cost at the beginning of the seventeenth century, and the drain of Huehuetoca was constructed, which is in operation now, though in parts where it was tunnelled, it has become dilapidated. In connection with the work which it is now proposed to commence, Dr. Guillermo Hay, Professor in the National School of Mines, has published an analysis of the waters of the lake of Tescoco. He states that it had been supposed that large salt water fountains existed in the lake, accounting for its saline properties; but he combats this opinion and attributes this fact to other causes. He says that the greater part of the mountains contiguous to the lake are formed of volcanic rocks, which, under the influence of the sun in the dry seasons, produce salt and soda on their surfaces—these being mainly their component parts—and that when the wet seasons commence, these substances are carried down by the rains into the lake. He says that this can be proved from the fact that all the rivers, or, at all events, all to the east of the lake, contain salt and soda at the beginning of the wet seasons, which are sensibly diminished in the course of a month. And calling to mind the course of centuries, during which this process has been going on, he considers the salt contained in the lake to be thus abundantly accounted for.

He then goes on to show that the lake contains more riches in salt than many a mine contains in

silver, and he gives the following analysis of the water :—

Water	98·890
Chloride of sodium	0·570
Carbonate of soda	0·485
Sulphate of soda	0·051
Animal substances, albuminous and gelatinous	0·001
Total	99·997

As regards earthquakes, I know not that any very serious apprehensions are entertained on this subject. Slight shocks have no doubt been felt from time to time ; but whether they would really become dangerous from the drying of the upper soil, is a question I am unable to discuss. What I know is, that one Sunday morning I distinctly felt two slight shocks close upon one another ; so slight, however, that, had I not already experienced such movements, my attention would scarcely have been awakened. But there is no mistaking the sort of underground hum or tremour of the grumbling earth when you have once realized it. On this occasion it was exactly a tremour and a hum, twice repeated, and nothing more. No one was moving in the house or in the street at the moment. I have experienced similar, but somewhat stronger sensations both in Chili and Peru ; and they who have visited the west coast of South America must be aware of their nature, and also that slight shocks of earthquake produce very various sensations.

The first I ever experienced was at Valparaiso,

while writing at an upper open window. My head seemed suddenly to be waving to and fro, as if I had become giddy and was about to fall; and on afterwards mentioning the fact, with perhaps an atom of uncomfortable feeling about myself, I was enlightened as to the cause to (I was about to say) my amusement. At all events the shock had been light enough for my inexperience to amuse others. Another occasion I will mention as showing a different effect. I was asleep on a French bedstead one night at Santiago, when I was disturbed by what appeared to be some one shaking one of the knobs. "Quien es?" I instinctively cried, on waking up. But only silence answered in the dark. I felt sure, therefore, that this was a new exhibition of my friend; and not falling asleep again immediately, I presently heard the town clock toll out two. On the next day I felt a grim sort of satisfaction in copying from the Santiago paper "Anoche a la una y cuarto se sintió un lijero remozon de tierra"—"Last night at a quarter-past one a slight shock of earthquake was felt." But many of such things pass in these countries, causing far less annoyance and observation than a shower of rain.

Walk about the streets, particularly along the San Francisco and Plateros, and you will observe a wonderfully mixed race, besides pure Mexicans and foreigners. The Indian tint and character abound. Señor Arangoiz calls the races "mestizas," which signifies more than mixed. Among both males and

females there is plenty of our common costume. I seem to find printed calicoes everywhere, as you may now find corrugated iron everywhere within ordinary distance of any tramway or railway, independently of these works themselves, where of course that ugly though useful material abounds. But also frequent among the Mexican population, you will see the very broad-brimmed hat, with its immense silver band and tassel. Many shops sell these hats, of course, and their windows beam with a display of them which might excite attention in far more advanced capitals than Mexico. Belonging to this head-dress, are generally to be seen the well-known tight yellow Mexican trousers, and these very often are fringed from top to bottom with large or small silver buttons, closely sewed on the outside of each leg. One wonders sometimes what is the real value in metal carried about by some of these people.

But the lottery-ticket sellers! Do not overlook them! What chance is there of that? In all garbs, of all ages, cripples among the number, they meet you in every street, and at every turn and corner, offering you their small flimsy tickets, down to the most insignificant fractions and prices. To these add the somewhat less restless invaders, the sellers of matches.

The serape is frequent. This is a sort of robe answering to our Scotch plaid, and is either thrown over the shoulders, or worn as a poncho; that is, with a hole cut in the middle through which to pass the

head, the robe lying over the shoulders. Many of the women wear the rebózo, a species of light muffler, which protects both head and shoulders. The rebózos are generally dull in colour, even the expensive ones; but the expensive serapes are, on the contrary, very gaudy. There is a taste for working into them a hard coloured centre pattern, besides adorning them with a gaudy border. I could not persuade myself to purchase one, as none were either to my own taste, nor would have been so to that of others. The seller suggested that I might buy one or two to give away for table covers; but even so I felt that their colours would have overwhelmed all others in any moderate drawing-room, independently of the chance—and a very probable one—of their being incongruous.

I possess a poncho which I bought some few years ago in Peru, of an old woman to whose hut I was taken while in Puno, by the lake of Titicaca, which is very much more to my taste in colour, and also of a much softer and pleasanter consistency than the Mexican serape. She pulled it out of a trunk where she had two or three more, all made by herself, of rather gaudier colours; but still, to my mind, not in bad taste. The poncho I speak of is made with a mixture of alpaca and vecuña hair, and is of one rich chocolate colour throughout, with a broad border of deep crimson, shading into lighter colour from each side to the centre, down which a white line runs.

The common cloth cloak is much more common

than the sleeved great coat in Mexico streets. There are always horsemen moving about on their bright little animals; sometimes quietly and sometimes teasing them, which I shall have to talk of later on. But one mode of saluting on horseback in the San Francisco I will here mention. Two fully equipped Mexicans recognize one another as they are meeting. Instead of pulling up, they will put in the spurs, curvet round one another, and then come to and salute. If you meet an amateur driver of a team, you will find five horses instead of four, and sometimes six; always two abreast as wheelers, and three or four abreast as leaders. There are one or two good whips with good horses whom I could name; but what pleasure there can be in driving over bad roads it might puzzle some of our four-in-hand club to understand. The light American trotting gig is beginning to take its place in the streets.

On the way out to the Paseo Nuevo, which, without any intended irony, I must call the Champs Elysées of Mexico, you pass the Alameda, or public planted walk. It is a large parallelogram of trees, measuring perhaps five hundred yards by two hundred and fifty. In the middle of it is an open circle with seats round a rather dull fountain. The whole is traversed by broad and narrow walks, and is resorted to as such spots in a city usually are.

The Count de Revillagigedo, one of the most celebrated of all the viceroys, has the credit of having

ornamented and enlarged it to its present size. It was commenced in 1593, and enclosed the Quemadero, where a later religion has the credit of burning as many heretics as the ancient religion of the Aztecs sacrificed of human beings. However, all is pleasant there now, when the sun shines.

Riding and driving take place on the Paseo Nuevo, in the centre of which stands a statue of Charles IV. of Spain. It is a broad and long avenue, fringed by common-looking trees, and in bad repair; and therefore the exercise is more or less of a bumping character. There is an out-of-order look about it altogether, as there is likewise in many of the carriages, which does not betoken peace and plenty. Nevertheless, on either side are to be seen at intervals, certain incongruously important stone benches, in the construction of which art would appear to have been indulged in at the expense of utility and economy.

By the side of this Paseo are to be found some Russian baths, to which tramcars run from the city; and the use of these is much recommended as an aid in curing the common indispositions that appear in Mexico.

By the side of the Paseo is also to be found the Plaza de Toros. As there was no bull-fighting going on while I was in Mexico, I saw nothing of their modes of proceeding in this diversion, and therefore cannot compare the Mexican bull-fight with the Spanish. But I was somewhat surprised at seeing

the sport denounced in more than one of the newspapers, the *Monitor Republicano* at their head, by whom it was coupled with gambling. How the Mexican public respond to the invitation to attend, or to the admonition to forbear, I know not; but from what I could gather, bull-fighting in Mexico is by no means so national a sport as it is in Spain. One important fact must be recorded, as bearing on this aspect of the question. Bull-fights are forbidden within the federal, or capital district. The Plaza de Toros in the Paseo is defunct.

Madame Calderon de la Barca gives a somewhat animated account of an exhibition she witnessed on the 6th of January (the Epiphany), 1840. It differed from what has been described to me as a Portuguese bull-fight, because the bull was killed, which is not the case in Portugal; but the tips of the bull's horns were balled, as they are there.

Nothing of this kind takes place in Madrid. There, man and bull meet on fair terms, so far at least as natural chances may be said to be concerned, though, of course, the numbers are against the bull. And, as regards these chances of the bull, I have always insisted on this fact also, that if the capeadores, that is those combatants whose office it is to buffet the bull over the eyes with their capas, had not the resource of vaulting the barrier from time to time, the bull would have the advantage of them. He is quite irresistible at the beginning.

I saw two representations while I was in Madrid, and there was no lack of excitement and appreciation there. The scene put me in mind of people going to the Derby, and it comes back to my memory while I write. I had seen many engravings of bull-fights, and spoken with some who had been present at such exhibitions at Madrid; but I never had obtained any clear impression of what the plan or course of the fight consisted in, and therefore I was determined to witness one myself. As a matter of course, such sport must cause suffering to the animal; that much one was prepared for; because there is no sport in the world that does not entail more or less of suffering on whatever is pursued, shot or slain. Nor from this category can be excepted the bold and intrepid enterprise of pigeon matches.

The two exhibitions that I witnessed of course took place upon two Sunday afternoons, because Sunday is always a holiday in the countries where the full-blown Christian Church prevails; and on these occasions there is assembled in front of the "Fonda de Paris" in the fine open Puerta del Sol (where there is no gate at all) a long row of every sort of vehicle extending down the fine Calle de Alcalá, and waiting for the hour of departure for the Plaza de los Toros. A rush of everybody to the scene then ensues, and thousands are soon seated round the arena in their different positions and different costumes. Half the circus lies in the sun and half in the shade, and on

the two occasions of my being present very few invaded the sunny side, though it is cheaper. But there were thousands present, and many ladies among them; though this fashion may be on the wane. My own seat was in the Tendidos—answering to the dress circle—and, of course, was in the shade. On the first Sunday the King came as President; but on the second, the Queen's illness was too serious to allow of his doing so; and on the Wednesday following, all Spain was in mourning for her. On his Majesty's entrance the whole glittering array of matadores, combatants, attendants, and mounted picadores entered from the opposite side, accompanied also with four handsomely caparisoned mules abreast, harnessed gaudily to a framework for carrying out the slain bull; and as all this variegated glittering group came towards us through the bright sunshine and entered our shade, to make their obeisance to the royal president, exactly under whose tribune I was sitting, the effect was extremely striking.

All non-combatants and the mules having withdrawn, and all the combatants having arranged themselves for the fight, the trumpets rang forth, and the two folding doors of the circus, exactly opposite to which I was sitting, were thrown open with a crash; and I must confess to have looked into the dark opening with, perhaps, the intensest curiosity I ever experienced, to see the first bull burst forth. This he suddenly did, with his eyes wild, his tail standing up

like a flag-staff of defiance, and his nostrils snorting for the contest. He was red; not large and heavy; on the contrary, he was compact and very active, with very sharp horns, and he bore some small ribbons on his shoulder, as the colours of the lord and master who had bred and sold him. After a moment's pause he came full tilt at the glittering capeadores, who were standing near the sides; and these, at the beginning of the fight, appear to have no other chance than that of leaping the barrier, which they do in the most active possible manner, waiting, however, in a row till the last possible moment of safety, so that the bull seems to be almost lifting them over one after another. Presently, when the bull begins to seem a little puzzled, these capeadores advance in a certain style of attack and begin to buffet his face with their capas, in the most daring manner; the general course being for a second, third, or fourth, to buffet him in turn, so as to prevent his pursuing any one of them without being interrupted and diverted by the other. Sometimes, however, this stratagem is not practicable and the capeador or buffeter has to run and leap the barrier.

By-and-by, the picadores on horseback push forward, their horses being blinded to prevent their running from the bull, and the men being heavily protected in their dress, and armed with a long lance, at the end of which is a short spike. On showing themselves, and provoking the bull, he rushes on

them, when they receive him on the spike, the wound of which greatly enrages him. Supposing him to be a good bull this torture only maddens him, and he will repeatedly return to the attack, lifting both horse and man bodily from the ground, and throwing them over. In this encounter it is that such revolting scenes take place with the horses, which are never of much value. The capeadores are, of course, always at hand, and the bull must be buffeted to prevent his slaying the prostrate picador. The changes and chances in this compound attack constitute the most exciting part of the combat.

All this may go on for perhaps some twenty minutes, and then a new combatant appears in the shape of what is called a banderilléro, whose part it is, in what may be called the second scene of the drama, to stick two-barbed darts, which he carries in his hands, into the bull's crest; the name banderilléro —*i.e.*, bearer of banderillas or small flags—being given because these darts are thus ornamented. This proceeding is said not to be so difficult as it appears to be; but certainly to all appearances the man seems to court destruction. For he deliberately stands out singly, though never too far from the barrier, and he puts forth his two arms horizontally, to and fro, like a living cross. The bull's attention is thus attracted, and he rushes full tilt upon the banderilléro who appears inevitably doomed to destruction; but, in a moment, the relative positions change; the man

runs forward to meet the bull and, instead of being caught on the horns, nimbly steps aside and sticks in the barbed darts. The electric shock of the pang causes the animal to stop almost at once, and then there succeeds his frantic endeavour to shake out the darts. I have seen as many as six of these in the bleeding crest at a time. Now and then, the mode in which the bull rushes does not allow of this proceeding; the man escapes, and the capeadores are at hand to divert the bull, and allow the banderilléro to resume his attack.

At last, when the bull has been sufficiently worried and confounded, forth comes the matador, or slayer, and bowing to the president, offers the bull and obtains leave to take his life. In this proceeding he stands quite alone, the rest being only near enough to help in case of some quite unexpected accident. The scene with the matador is not very prolonged, but it is most dangerous. The man and the bull are face to face with one another; the first has his Toledo sword in his right hand, and his square red flag spread out on the other: the last has his horns. In this combat the matador is sometimes, but rarely, cogido, or caught, and, if so, the results are sure to be serious. Indeed, he dare not attempt this single combat until the bull has been sufficiently exhausted and perplexed; and it has sometimes happened that the matador is obliged to retire, and appeal to the combatants to confuse the animal yet more. The course

of the matador is to play with the bull and taunt him with the red flag until, taking his time and opportunity, he steadily points the blade to the spot between the two shoulders and heavily thrusts it down into the bull's heart. If the blow is artistically given the animal's death should be easy. In this case, he turns round once or twice, almost upon the spot where he stands, and falls dead without—and this is essential to the perfect performance of the matador—without a show of blood. Being dead, the four belled mules abreast are driven in, and Hector's corpse is dragged triumphantly away.

Such is the outline of a bull-fight as I saw it performed in Madrid. I found it necessary to go twice in order thoroughly to realize the exhibition in all the extraordinary features attaching to it, which have been so often descanted on. There are six bulls sacrificed on each occasion. I know not whether the art of the matador has declined, or whether (as is so often the case) writers and painters who have never seen the fight have misled us by merely ingenious efforts to beautify their page or picture. But out of the ten bulls in all which I saw killed, only one was killed in a perfect manner; and this was one of those, and one only of them, killed by Frascuelo. Of the others, some were killed quickly but with great vomiting of blood; others were killed downright badly. The capeando, and dancing, and pirouetting close before the bull by Pastor was, on one occasion,

most exciting and astonishing. On neither of the days did I wait to see the sixth bull killed, if only because I wished to escape the crowding out at last, and the rush to get places to return to the city.

I have said that these bulls wear the colours of their breeders and sellers. If one or two of them behave poorly and disappoint the spectators, there are loud expressions of disgust and ridicule on all sides; and if the individual in question happens to be present (as he was when one or two of the bulls I saw shirked the fight) he is made the especial object of them. In these cases (though I have not witnessed such) even crackers are tied to the banderillas in order to enrage the animal to the required point. And I am also informed that on a cry "á los perros" dogs were formerly set on the bull with the same object.

The first set of bulls had been bred at the hacienda of the Duke of Veraguas; a title more honoured by its association with the name of Columbus, than by bull-fights. The second set came from the hacienda of the Duke de Santillo. As regards these last bulls I could not but look upon a certain circumstance connected with them as most ironical; but Spaniards have told me I am wrong. Their owner having very suddenly died at Seville, just before the fight, they put the bulls in mourning for him!

Whether Spain will sooner or later relinquish this mode of pastime yet remains to be seen. That thousands still devour it with enjoyment is certain; and

the extinction of a national sport must be the work of time upon changing brains. I could not gather that the Mexicans, as a rule, are very ardently devoted to the bull-fight. Indeed, to any one the whole proceeding grows monotonous, as bull after bull is passed through the same course of persecution.

The city is dull by night. There are two theatres; the Principal and the Nacional; but you must not look for gay cafés; the only lively scene is the crowded billiard-room of the Iturbide, where all grades and ages spend many hours together, and where I have myself engaged with Señores Licenciados. The main streets are lighted with gas, but only dull gas, made from resin. Produced on the eastern side of the city, it sometimes fails to reach the western. It is not only dull, but of an unusual specific gravity; so much so, that on one occasion when an aeronaut had filled his balloon with it, to make an ascent from the Plaza, that swollen animal, instead of mounting in the air, laid its huge form gently down upon the ground, in pious obedience to the laws of gravitation. The city police carry lamps, which they place in the centre of the main streets, to guide what vehicles there may be to their proper side. Smaller streets are lighted with oil lamps, hung across them. I understand a contract for lighting has been entered into with the Brush Electric Light Company.

Mexico, like all other capitals where the general country is developing, must develop also, but it may

possibly be kept back to a certain extent, not only by its distance from the coast, this being as many as two hundred and sixty-three miles, but also by the long stretch of the unwholesome Tierra Caliente and the sixty miles of arduous sierra that lie between the city and the port. The shape of the country is, indeed, very singular; but while this fact entails great drawbacks it grants all climates, in each of which there is a fertile soil to yield the kindred productions.

The vast chain of the Andes that runs through South America is represented as branching out into two very irregular branches right and left, something in the shape of a very rude and irregular letter Y, and enclosing the somewhat irregular high table lands of Mexico between the branches. These are called the Tierras Frias, or cold regions. The two branches themselves bear the names of the Sierra Madre Occidental on the western or Pacific side, and the Sierra Madre Oriental on the eastern or Atlantic side. On the outside slopes of these we find what are called the Tierras Templadas, or temperate regions; and below these, stretching towards both seas, we have the Tierras Calientes, or hot regions; comprehending all those lands lying below a height of two thousand feet. Those on the Pacific side are less extensive than those on the eastern side, for on the Pacific side the mountain range is not very distant from the sea. But on the eastern side these lands are very extensive, comprehending the states of Tamau-

lipas, the greater part of Vera Cruz, Tabasco, and Yucatan. And all that can be grown in these climates (as I have said) Mexico has soil to produce.

It is a great disadvantage as regards wealth, commerce, busy life, and easy means of communication with the outward world, that a city should lie very far inland. Some theorists have contended that a capital should be central, for purposes of safety, thus overlooking the enormous sacrifice in other respects entailed by such a position, and the fact that a country should be always more or less able to defend itself. It has been asserted, on the other hand, that Spain would never have lost Portugal could Philip II. have been induced to make Lisbon his capital instead of that famous city which we know lies buried in the bosom of dry land. Peter the Great founded St. Petersburg, that he might (to use his own expression) have a window looking out into the Baltic; and however flat, poor and disappointing the position of that otherwise fine city is, with its shallow river and low bridges, the entrance to the Neva shows by its busy movements how necessary it was to supersede old Moscow. Napoleon I., in recognizing the fact that he wished Paris was nearer the shore, said boastfully that he would make Paris and Havre one city, of which the Seine should be the high street. No change in position can be made as regards the capital in Mexico, but it is well to bear in mind the disadvantages under which it must labour.

The freights on goods inland, again, must always be heavy, in consequence of the heavy expenses in working the railway. People who calculate freights by the simple mileage of a line without knowing its form of construction, and (it may be added), the climate in which those who work it have to live, arrive at their conclusions without knowing more than half the story. I remember complaints being made of the freights established on the Brazilian São Paulo line, because people counted by the simple mileage, not bearing in mind that five miles out of the eighty-seven were worked on inclines of one foot in ten, by four fixed engines and steel ropes; and that, besides the expense of working these miles, the expense of constructing them was enormous. If you will calculate your freights upon your mileage you must first reduce all your heavy gradients to ordinary locomotive capacity, and then calculate the mileage that this would give you. Now on the Mexican line, I am not far, if at all, wrong when I say that were those tremendous works upon the sixty miles of sierra reduced to such a ratio, the line would show, not two hundred and sixty miles of length but some six hundred miles instead! And upon that length, therefore, ought the freights now payable to be calculated.

But, of course, as they read high, it is very tempting to the government to listen to proposals for lines, the promoters of which hold out hopes of cheaper

construction and cheaper freights. Could such conditions be established I suppose the first openers of the country, who not only were the first pioneers of her progress but were also called upon, because of her own disordered condition, to battle with frightful difficulties, anxieties and overladen capital, would feel themselves obliged to abandon all moral considerations, all claims to gratitude on that score. Nor could they possibly arrange the massacre of Cholulans and others, like Cortés, to enforce their claim.

But, even, if the government are inclined to waste their time in granting concessions (I know not if they have the right to do so) for opposition lines from Vera Cruz to Mexico, at least they should insist on surveys being first carefully made, and plans carefully and honestly prepared. I was credibly informed, while in Mexico, that there are already two opposition schemes for making supposed cheaper and better lines from Vera Cruz to the capital, upon promise of cheaper rates, without even the scratch of a pen in the shape of a plan having been presented to the government; and this, be it remembered, not over easy, or ordinarily difficult ground but, with the gigantic and broken Sierra Madre del Oriente immediately frowning in front of the proposers! One of these lines is schemed for starting from its terminus somewhat to the south of Vera Cruz, where, it is asserted, a less inconvenient port can be found. But the general nature of this Eastern shore entirely

forbids the obtaining of any such advantage in this respect as could, for one moment, be held to justify the ruinous sacrifice of property that would be incurred by such a scheme. The idea, indeed, seems grotesque. Whatever eastern port Mexican commerce will require must be an artificially constructed port; and Vera Cruz must inevitably be that port. Let the young and little more than nascent government of Mexico, which is now so ardently desirous, as it would appear, to enter into the family of commercial nations, consider whether this mode of proceeding is likely to advance or to shake their repute for capacity of administration; whether it shows them fitted to foster that development of their resources which would establish their credit on the important marts of Europe.

Anybody can undertake to do impossibilities by word of mouth or by figures on paper. So it happened (referring again to the Brazilian line above mentioned) in São Paulo. When the line now in work was decided on, somebody else immediately claimed to know of a better. A learned baron made a learned speech in the House of Deputies, but without presenting a plan; and another learned German doctor made a facile off hand model of the whole Serra do Mar, which I am not aware that he ever disclosed. But the Fays and the Fairies are not good engineers; no better line was found in São Paulo, nor were such pretensions listened to in Brazil. I cannot but fancy it would be good advice to the government of Mexico

to remind them that unless they can get the Fairies to make both these new lines, and make them pay, when made, on reduced tariffs, they had better follow the example of Brazil—laugh at such proposals and confine their concessions and their promises of subventions to enterprises honestly calculated to develop the resources of their most undoubtedly magnificent country. Blind schemes can only divert attention and mislead energy; and not only so, they may also hamper and impede really necessary and advantageous enterprises by wasting money and disappointing labour, and thus discouraging capital.

There is no doubt that a certain activity of development has now begun among Mexicans, in which the Americans are taking a prominent part, cutting and carving out iron lines of communication (one might almost say) all over the country. And this, really, is the first and best step to be pursued; for with the exception of such railways as do exist, among which the gigantic English enterprise towers conspicuous, and of the tramways, Mexico is, to all intents and purposes, not only ill supplied with roads, but is without any real roads at all. Call the things they have roads, if you like, but I will defy you to apply to them any signification of that word which you can find in any possible dictionary. Therefore, in these late days of road-constructing, the country cannot afford to lose time and money in macadamizing roads, or on the paving system, on which the Spaniards

of old spent so much art and labour, as being the then best method of establishing circulation, but it must take up the last inventions at starting, and lay down rails for steam, or for mule, to wherever her produce is waiting to be brought to market, or her soil is waiting to be bought and cultivated, with any hope of turning its produce to account. An additional motive for these facilities may also be urged in the scarcity of rivers for water-carriage.

Now, it is very natural that the Americans should be the people to aid Mexico much in doing all this; for they have all the means and energy wherewith to do it, if they act with common prudence; and, what is very important, they are the next door neighbours to Mexico. What, for example, can be a grander scheme in this New World than that of laying a continuous line between Mexico city and New York? and who but the Americans can do this? Done it must be; nor do we want the intervention of prophets to predict the fruits of such an enterprise. Then we must bear in mind the different ports upon the west coast that are to be put into communication with the interior; such as Acapulco, already mentioned as the best natural port in Mexico; Manzanillo, San Blas, Mazatlan, and Guaymas. In short, there is so much to be done, and so much worth doing, that it is greatly to be feared good work may be interrupted by the fostering of intemperate and futile speculations with facile and unguarded concessions.

In speaking of American enterprise, I am quite aware that there exist certain political jealousies and misgivings as regards the relationship between the Two Sister Republics, as they have been called; and these are not forgotten, even while concessions are being so easily signed, that a motive would rather appear to exist to force on relations. Juarez, I was told, would never listen to enterprises calculated to plant our cousins' foot upon the land; and one or two other authorities have, until lately, been actuated by similar misgivings. Mexico has proved the power of the States, no doubt; and the re-distribution of territory in the north is matter of but recent history. Naturally enough, the Mexicans from time to time recall these facts, which may make them think of the quaint old proverb, that if you sup with the devil you must have a long spoon. We read of what is called "The Great Northern Hive" in history. The States, containing altogether some fifty millions of energetic inhabitants, may certainly be so designated in comparison with the nine million three hundred thousand in Mexico, as presently referred to. But the Americans are not a Northern Hive of Barbarians, and Mexico, like all else in the world, must accept her position, and take care of herself in her intercourse with others; in which case, though she cannot be greater and stronger than the course of nature will allow her to be, yet she may be as great and as strong; and indeed, greater and stronger by far than she ever can

be by internal petty political squabbles and petty personal ambitions which hitherto have eaten up her hopes abroad and her vitals at home.

"Do not believe, sir," said an American to me, "that we want to annex Mexico; we have already too much to do with all we now possess." So far as my friend knew anything about his country's politics this was a sensible remark, and I don't suppose that Washington for one moment contemplates evil designs on Mexico. But there are other modes of annexation; and the Two Sister Republics may find themselves annexed to one another before either are aware of the fact. In this respect the United States of Mexico might hail the invasion of the United States of America. It would mean annexation by friendly immigration of families, with money and energy to buy lands, cultivate them, make roads; with the introduction of improved and more advanced customs of life; with intermarriages and the insensible and inevitable infusion of the more vigorous blood and bone into the more rapid and more subtle nature. In such case, each might conquer the other, and both inscribe, as their common motto,

"Peace hath her victories,
No less renowned than war."

One mode there is, however, and one only, that could cause the forcible or virtually forcible annexation of Mexico by the Northern States:—So much of their wealth and enterprise having been invited into the

country, let there be one more, and one more only, of those detestable revolutions, and annexed, or virtually so, Mexico most assuredly will be. In such case what better could happen to her? They who cannot take care of themselves must be taken care of by others who are concerned with them.

Now the present conditions of Mexico in reference to her taking a new position among the nations are peculiar. The country is very large, presenting an area given variously between 750,000 and 800,000 square miles, of which extent some idea may be formed by bearing in mind that the whole area of Great Britain and Ireland with all the islands are given at about 124,000 square miles. But the population of Mexico amounts to little, if any, more than 9,300,000 souls, or about twelve inhabitants to a square mile. Now, let us put these figures into the strongest form of illustration; and in order to show how thinly Mexico is inhabited, let us multiply our own square miles by twelve, and see what population that would give us. It would not give us 1,500,000 souls throughout the whole United Kingdom.

But there is more still. I was repeatedly informed that two-thirds of the Mexican population are *indigines*, or those erroneously called Indians—this name, by the way, exemplifying how an original error will survive, nay stick, in spite of subsequent knowledge. Now these Indians will never make a nation, though distinguished individuals may now and then spring

forth from among them. They are by nature born to follow and obey the white man; they are in general very faithful, obedient and pacific; they are content with low wages (*6d.* or *1s.* a day sometimes) and with common food and little clothing, living upon their tortillas and pulque; sleeping on mats, and dressing in common cottons of home manufacture, without shoes and stockings. They will do well and diligently what they are set to do, and will give very little trouble to any one. But they are a people who in the phrase which a Mexican officer used in a conversation with me, *ni producen ni consumen:* they neither produce nor consume; and unhappily, from their easy nature, they have been too often persecuted and driven into being made the instruments of mere revolutionists.

How much soever, then, the Mexicans may be able to do of themselves, it is impossible, except in the sense of a most limited existence, that they can hope with this population to replenish their earth and subdue it. Mexico is, indeed, "an unweeded garden." Did the people of any naturally fertile country ever stand in greater need of immigration and machinery? To continue in their old state with all the untidy gifts of nature growing unruly about them, and, so to speak, insisting on growing, is one thing; but to correspond honourably with heavy engagements already entered into, to resist that natural disposition to easy existence to which an exuberantly producing

nature in a fine climate would incline mankind of every race, and to send forth the numberless valuable products of their land in the best possible quantity and condition, so as to command a return of their highest value in the mart, this is another. Intercourse with more advanced nations is under the latter aspect of affairs indispensable, with a large introduction (as I have intimated) of new population, not only human, but (let the figure be allowed me) mechanical. In putting forth all her energies with these views, Mexico can have nothing to fear from the embrace of her Sister Republic, but will thereby strengthen her people, and therefore her Government; for the power of a nation lies in its people, and the power of a people depends on their exertions and attainments. It is not by Governments that nations are made strong; on the contrary, it is a strong people that needs and makes a strong Government. Hapless and helpless would be the nation that distrusted its own people, its own self; and hapless and hopeless the nation who should shrink from intercourse, for the objects of progress and assistance, with an advanced neighbour from fear of its greater power.

CHAPTER VI.

DISCURSIVE AND DESCRIPTIVE.

WHEN I left for Mexico in June of last year, I not only violated usual rules by making that voyage out of season, as I was told, but I also further sinned by the intention of devoting little more than two months to my stay in the country. But then I knew that I took very good letters with me, and that steam would carry me the whole way to the straight-streeted capital in the green plain of Tenochtitlan, which I could thus at once make my head-quarters. Moreover, I knew that this visit would be very far indeed from being my first abroad, and that I should therefore have little or nothing of that rust to rub off, which lies so thickly and solidly over the outside of some of us insular products of mother Hertha. I knew, also, that I should not have to walk about for a week or ten days before I could begin to persuade myself that there might possibly be such people as Mexicans in Mexico. I knew something, also, of their language, and did not affect to consider it to be a mere monkey's acquirement to be able to make, in some sort, an educated

use of it. Moreover, my destinies had cast my dwelling for something more than a period of eight consecutive years, and some four years afterwards, among a kindred people, whose most valuable agricultural industries exactly coincided with those I was to be introduced to in Mexico; sugar, for example; coffee especially; cotton, tobacco, maize:

"Cum multis aliis quæ nunc præscribere longum est,"

as saith, or rather said, our old-fashioned Eton Latin Grammar—a respectable old book, which the ever-changing human brain, that changes and will and must change until it expires altogether, has changed away for new forms; which new forms will by-and-by be changed away for others, or perhaps back again for the old one, which still will be changed again.

Thus, in point of fact, I felt myself entirely at home in Mexico from the moment when I began to talk to my little dry Custom House officer at Vera Cruz, and that I was already in possession of part and parcel of my story. Otherwise, I might appear to be intruding the result of mere schoolboy glimpses of the country upon the public, as one who virtually had scarcely landed on her shores; and thus my volume might, even if accidentally taken up, have been disdainfully thrown down again, in spite, nevertheless, of the apparently acknowledged fact that they who have never seen a place, and therefore know nothing of it personally, have always the right to say

a great deal more about it than those who have really been there.

And besides saying this much in defence of my pages, I must add, in my own personal defence against a charge of having gone to and fro over so many leagues of ocean to spend comparatively so short a time in Mexico—the course over the blue waters having occupied nearly as many weeks as did the stay on shore—that for myself I reckoned my pleasure began when the hawsers were loosened in Southampton. Though out of season in general for the tropics, or, more correctly to speak, for the lands lying between the tropics, or the sun's turning points, I was quite in season for the sea, over which I had a full right to expect a pleasant passage to and fro. And in virtue of this right Neptune condescended to wave his trident for propitious weather all through. This it should always be in his power to accomplish, although he may certainly disclaim all responsibility for tooth-cutting children, tiresome parents, and steam winches. And light-tongued revilers are they of Neptune, too, who judge of his reign over his more than two thirds of the whole surface of the world by merely what they witness among our northern seas and channels! Tracts and tracts of water there are upon the vasty deep that lie in quiet converse with the skies, content that every barque should course their breast in safety, if only the unruly winds would let them be. Here Æolus it is that's more to blame; though Virgil

shows that Neptune, if he cares to do so, can defy even him. "*Illâ se jactet in aulâ*," says the contemptuous god when he stills the waves for Æneas, and sends the winds to tell their king to rule over them in his own caves. But winds and waves are all a part of Nature in her various courses; they have their good effects as well as bad, though they send many to an unmarked grave in working out their rough benevolence, "lashing before them" (as Lord Erskine once said of the winds, to Lord Brougham's intense admiration), "lashing before them the lazy elements, which, without the tempest, would stagnate into pestilence."

Little indeed do they know of the beauties of the sea who have never really been to sea. The ocean has been called a desert of water; and so, in some sense, it may be called. When Æolus and Neptune are at war, defying one another, then the delight must be only in the grandeur of the storm, which, perhaps, but very few even of poets would wish to realize. But when I speak of the beauties of the sea I am recurring chiefly to the charms of colour when the weather is fair, though varied. For my own part, though I could never induce myself to take a brush in hand (whatever by some remote possibility I may yet do), my delight in colour amounts almost to a disease, certainly to a weakness. I know not how large a proportion of my delights in travel, from my most northern point, at the North Cape, to my most

southern, at the Strait of Magellan, or from my most eastern point, at Nijri Novgorod, to my most western at Mexico, I know not how large a proportion would have been wanting, nor how much of my intention to travel again would be cooled, were it not for my enjoyment of colours. Those of the sea are of infinite variety, and its ever varying surface is continually varying all the tints. You must not speak of the azure, but of the azures; not of the rose, but of the roses; not of the green, but of the greens. By reflection from showery sunsets, which have for a short period set all the hovering clouds on fire, I have seen the whole ocean as of moving molten bronze; I have seen it, off the coast of Norway, like the "liquid tin," which Camoens mentions in his "Lusiads." In this I was confirmed by a fellow passenger, himself a painter, who was thoroughly alive to colour, and who enriched his journey with as good interpretations as art could afford of those most especial colourings of the Loffodens. And lastly, under a tropical full moon, a moon to read by, I have seen it all a heaving breast of silver. Still, I do not ask any one to say that he sees anything in all this. Many such there are, and to them the sea must be a bore; yea, an unfathomable bore!

Thus, then, though out of my sixteen weeks' absence I spent seven upon the wonders of the ocean, during which, it must be remembered, I touched and went on shore at several new ports, yet I had plenty

of time to realize a great deal in Mexico, the general features of which are now mapped out in my memory.

I had three main objects in mind while I was in that country. To visit the coffee and sugar haciendas, and compare them with the fazendas in Brazil, where labour is carried on by slaves—no such class existing in Mexico, and now gradually to disappear in the former country. I also desired to visit some one of the many mining districts ; and I likewise had made up my mind, in spite of one or two friendly warnings on the subject of roads (or, rather, no roads) in the wet summer months, to set apart some few days for a journey to a certain city—one which I believe is destined soon to take a most important position in Mexico, but one which will ever be associated with a gloomy tragedy—I mean the city of Querétaro. With these objects accomplished, it seemed to me that it would not be necessary to visit every hacienda of sugar and every hacienda of coffee, nor to look down every mine that was to be found, nor to go over every abominable course called a road, nor to measure every quagmire and stone, nor to visit every single city. The great question in Mexico at the present moment is, after all, What can she show to justify the railways that are constructed and are in course of construction ?

But there were two journeys that I would have much desired to make which I could not make. They were, however, two of curiosity only. One was

a journey to see the great grotto of Cacahuamilpa; and one to see what were represented to me as being three ancient temples extremely like those I had visited on Old Nile. Certainly if the accounts I heard of these were correct, they must be far more deserving of comparison with remains in Egypt than I had considered the earth-pyramids of San Juan Teotihuacan and Cholula to be.

These three temples are to be seen in the neighbourhood of the city of Oajaca, the capital of the State of that name. But Oajaca lies upwards of two hundred miles in a south-eastern direction from Mexico, though the road thither would now begin from the railway at Puebla. Not, however, being either a devoted or a learned archæologist, I could not contemplate so venturesome a summer journey merely to visit these remains, which, in company with an instructed companion, and at a fair time and season, would assuredly tempt me to the scene. Oajaca, however, stands a very fair chance of being brought into more living notice than its three old temples would ever be able to obtain for it. It lies not far off one of those contemplated lines of railway in Mexico which offer a feasible aspect. I know not the condition of the enterprise or of the works, but I know that American engineers are at work upon the surveys; and I am aware that the *Tiber*, which brought me away from Vera Cruz, brought one of them thither, and that he embarked

for the southern coast as we left for Cuba. The line I speak of is that which it is proposed to construct across the southern neck of Mexico, commencing at Minatitlan on the east coast, and ending at Tehuantepec on the western, thus affording a tolerably direct line from England to New Zealand and Australia. The country it is to traverse is easy; whether it is healthy where it is easy I cannot quite say. But it cannot possibly be more unhealthy (if as much so) than the Isthmus of Panama, with the contemplated canal through which it may possibly offer some competition; and it may possibly be sooner completed. That canal, however, would obviate the annoying and expensive necessity of two transhipments, and thus offer an immense superiority in travelling to this line, unless, to be sure, we can manage to revive the simple scheme of a transhipment railway, by which our great hulks of vessels are to be lifted bodily out of the water and run along upon trucks with about a thousand wheels each.

Be all this as it may, Oajaca itself is a very clean and healthy city, with a climate ranging between 63° and 78° of Fahrenheit. I was told that it is one of the cleanest and best looking cities in the Republic, water being brought by aqueducts from the neighbouring hills. The chief feature, however, which must some day serve to bring it more forth into life, and to animate it with population, is the extreme fertility of its lands. The old publications upon Mexico

support what is now declared of it; it gives all the cerealia and the sugar-cane with facility. Cochineal and silk also offer promises to cultivation. One aristocratic fact in the history of Oajaca must also be remembered; it gave the title of Marquis of the Valley of Oajaca to the Duke of Monteleone, representative of the family of Cortés. Moreover, it can boast of being the birthplace of General Porfirio Dias. So much for Oajaca, and its three temples, which I did not see.

As regards the great cave at Cacahuamilpa, just as I was anxious to compare the temples with those in Egypt, so was I desirous of comparing the cave of Cacahuamilpa with those of Adelsberg in Austrian Carniola, which now lie within short railway distance from Trieste, and indeed, not so very many hours from Vienna. But it was vain to flirt with the feasibility of this excursion; this was altogether out of season; so far out of it, that it was entirely beyond reach.

Though the journey is never undertaken but in the winter months, this fact, of itself, need not, perhaps, have deterred me. But it is never undertaken except in companies; provisions must be carried with you, and Bengal lights and rockets, which last word, by the way, may afford some notion of the heights of the cavern. Letters must also be written beforehand for the providing of saddle-horses, and of friendly entertainment at more than one hacienda. And finally, permission in due form to examine the cave must be

obtained of the governing authority of the district. I believe I may add that the provision of an escort enters also into the necessary arrangements. The cave lies in the State of Morelos, and the railway should at all events make the beginning of the journey more easy than of old. As to attempting any minute description of this no doubt enormous cave of stalactite and stalagmite, I could have no right to any such pretension, except upon the ground that I have never seen it. Not only is it so vast that it has never yet been really explored, but a visitor has declared to me that in some of the many courts a rocket (I suppose the small religious holiday rockets) will explode before reaching the summit. We do not comprehend these vastnesses in comparison with the cabinet pictures of our own island. The journey also to the cave comprehends beautiful scenes of cultivation and of grandeur; and as regards the former, I am tempted to give an extract from "Life in Mexico," written by Madame Calderon de la Barca, in 1843.

The party were at a sugar hacienda called Atlacamulco, belonging to one Don Anselmo Zurutuza, where they had passed the night. "This morning," she writes, "after a refreshing sleep, we rose and dressed at eight o'clock, and then went out into the coffee plantation and orange walk. Anything so lovely! The orange trees were covered with their golden fruit and fragrant blossom; the lemon trees, bending over, formed a natural arch, which the sun

could not pierce. We laid ourselves down on the soft grass, contrasting this day with the preceding" (they had travelled by Diligencia). "The air was soft and balmy, and actually heavy with the fragrance of the orange blossom and starry jasmine. All round the orchard ran streams of delicious sweet water trickling with sweet music, and now and then a little cardinal, like a bright red ruby" (such as I have described at Puebla), "would perch on the trees."

This is a poetically graphic description of a lounge in a plantation between the tropics, and serves to show the fertility of Mexico. Madame Calderon de la Barca was a Scotch lady by birth; she was married to a Spanish gentleman in the diplomatic service, who was the Spanish Minister in Mexico; and she spent two years in the country. I have many recollections myself of hours such as she described, with Nature all round me, as untidy and littering as she was profuse in plant and fruit. I cannot copy all that Madame Calderon says about the cave, but I could almost say the same things of the caves of Adelsberg. I fancy, however, that Cacahuamilpa may be larger and even still more astonishing. It was somewhat mortifying not to be able to make one of those excursion parties that visit the scene, and live half wild for some ten days on foot and horseback, before returning to Mexico; but I remember being more disappointed on being unable to accept an invitation in São Paulo to join a large caravan of men, mules, provisions, tents, guns,

and fishing-rods, who actually went up country in that beautiful climate, and passed three months among the woods and plains and streams, delighting in, and partly living on their sport. It is in these hunting excursions that they secure the anta, or long-nosed tapir.

Though we cannot quite manage to visit Cacahuamilpa in a shilling hansom cab, we have Adelsberg much nearer home; and though in journeying thither, either from Trieste or Vienna, we cannot lounge among coffee and orange trees, yet, as I can personally testify, besides the truly magnificent and astonishing features of the caves, the neighbouring country, in all directions, abounds with European beauties. In my own roundabout excursion in these districts, I chose to run down coast from Trieste to the deserted city of Pola; and thence struck up through Fiume and Agram. But taking the common line from Trieste to Vienna, or *vice versâ*, and visiting Adelsberg, a vast variety of beauty may be realized. The passage of the railway over the Semering Pass is, almost of itself alone, worthy of a visit; and indeed, while I was at Adelsberg, a party of three respectable Viennese were making their short holiday on a visit to the caves. This little fact, by the way, is connected with one which I hold to be of great importance as regards Adelsberg; and as I am wandering over several memories, and have not at all bound myself to "keep to the record" (as the learned

lawyers say) in treating of Mexico, I shall hover over Carniola for a moment.

It was about ten o'clock on a lovely morning, being by date the 19th of August, 1880, when I aristocratically drove up in full and sole possession of a bright railway omnibus to the door of the Adelsberger hotel, beautifully situated, and kept by Herr Progler. I did not want a bed?—then I wanted a cave? was anybody else at the hotel to join in the expense of lighting it? Yes; there were three Germans, one being a lady; and they had just made their arrangements. I found, however, that they had bespoken only the second class illumination; and as I have a constitutional horror of second-class of any kind, I asked them, why not do the thing well, and have the first-class illumination? But their ideality was deficient in this respect; they were content; they were "zufrieden!" How German that is, to be sure! For myself, I distrusted even the first-class illumination, for, after all, it was to consist but of candles! I would not even go at all with the second, so I paid up the whole difference on my own account, and off we started, with a provision of eighteen hundred wicks. I am by no means going to describe the caves; they lie too near; but if anybody wishes to see saloons and canopied roofs; beautiful gates of temples (after Raphael), naves of cathedrals, etc., and all in stalactite and stalagmite, during the space of about two hours, let him go to Adelsberg. Yet, again, I

would say, do not go to Adelsberg even with eighteen hundred candles; they are, as I anticipated they must be, simply tantalizing. Add to this, two men walk before you with oil lamps of the dirtiest description, and swing the offensive smoke about your nostrils. The Germans thoroughly acknowledged all this when we again emerged into the sunshine; they said they would have seen absolutely nothing without the first-class light. However, the good people left the expenses as they stood; they were "zufrieden." Here, then, is Austria with her Adelsberg which might bring her thousands of visitors, lighted with trumpery candles, all else being absolutely forbidden; and there is Mexico with her Cacahuamilpa, illuminated with rockets and Bengal lights, but far and far away beyond the reach of the tourist, if not quite so of the general traveller.

CHAPTER VII.

PACHUCA.

So much for these two caves—Mexican and European. And now that I have come back to Mexico, I will try and keep there, for a little while again, and having descanted, and somewhat digressively, upon what I did not do, I will collect my thoughts a little and talk about what I did do.

First of all, then, I went to Pachuca, the centre of one of the great mining districts. This was one of my stated purposes; and as I had started at a very early hour to go to Puebla, so I started at a very late one on my present excursion. I joined Mr. Jackson at the railway station at about the appointed hour of the night train, with which we were to go as far as Ometusco. This is the station for Pachuca, being about forty-two miles from Mexico. A well-known friend of his, Mr. Turnbull, a mining engineer, accompanied us, so that under this joint generalship I was prepared to understand everything at once about mining. One fact, however, connected with this deep science did not need much new elucidation;

namely, that the owner almost always goes as deep into his pocket as he does into his shaft, and that this last very often proves as empty as the pocket it has emptied. But Pachuca, lying about one hundred and twelve kilometres, or seventy miles, from Mexico, exhibits, in real truth, vast wealth all round its neighbourhood.

It had been arranged that we must pass the night in our manager's long car, which we could have done without suffering any arctic agonies; but on being detached at Ometusco in a Mexican moonlight—and, remember, at eight thousand feet above the sea—we were cheerfully met by the station-master with an invitation to supper and beds which he had, as assiduously as unexpectedly, prepared for us. Such are the chances in travelling with popular chiefs! So to supper and to bed we went, and returning to early travelling hours for the next day, we were called about half-past five to greet a rising sun in a morning that seemed to be rubbing its own hands in the sparkling air, to wish us "buen viáje."

I need not describe the Diligencia, for I mean to dilate on that now gradually expiring race when I talk of my more important jaunt to Querétaro. Suffice it to say that the weather was quite dry, and that we had only an hour and a half's journey on these wheels; for at the end of that time we drew up to the joy and comfort of a mule tramway station. The rest of the journey was therefore performed with luxury, through

a country laughing with cattle, maize and other cereals; especially with the aloe, or maguey, near the station of San Augustin, where the best pulque is said to be produced. At about eleven o'clock we arrived at Pachuca, and were met by Señor Don Bernabé, from the hacienda in which we were to be domiciled. Here we found ourselves among the hills and mountains—for mines are not to be sought for in flat green plains, however high these may lie above the sea—and the air was as pure as purity itself. As regards the town of Pachuca, I know not what I can particularly say of it. It has up streets and down streets, and paved streets and dusty streets; it has also churches and flat roofed houses, and other houses, great and small. One of the former, of a decidedly important architecture, is occupied by the Señor Don Licenciado (D.L.) José de Landero y Cos, who is the worthy agent of the old-established Real del Monte Company, and with whom I became acquainted as a guest, before returning to Mexico.

The hacienda struck me as presenting something very peculiar in its aspect. The house is small, and built in the open sort of style prevalent in these countries; a narrow railed veranda runs along in front of the rooms, which open upon it, and look into an uneven courtyard below, all being in a sort of out-of-repair condition. The view beyond is striking in its character. You look out upon a sort of dry mineral looking mountain, dotted all over with small

miners' habitations, and you see the people—male and female, old and young—clambering up and steering down among their boxes of cottages, as they come or go in the course of their day's occupations.

But the most peculiar part of the view within the premises was a mass of apparently very elaborate machinery for extracting silver ore, which had been put together in a lower and larger portion of the yard into which the outer doors or gates opened from the street. And the whole of this machinery, though evidently excellent in itself, was all the more striking from the aspect it wore of abandonment and desolation. I could not but inquire the meaning of all this—for the hacienda belongs to a wealthy family—and I was told that this machinery had been erected for the purpose of supplying what the ores of Pachuca and the surrounding districts, nay, indeed all the mining districts of Mexico, are loudly crying out for; namely, for the crushing and reducing of the silver ores in a far more effectual manner than has yet existed in the country, and for want of which millions of pesos have been washed away, and are still following. But it unhappily came to pass that on its being for the first time set to work, it was committed to incompetent and uninstructed hands, and in consequence of this some boiler or boilers had burst, by means whereof the whole affair had been thrown out of order and had been left in that abject condition ever since. Now, this is a fair sample of what is

going on in the *not* doing style in Mexico; and it shows also what people know ought to be done, and what some day must be done, when this country is laid hold of, as it will be, by the grasp of an invading civilization. Meanwhile, there lies this neglected machinery, disabled by ignorance, but capable of yielding, as it were, gold for silver, by the mere saving of waste alone, were it only in the hands of those who could seriously comprehend its real value, and knew how to treat it.

In the morning we mounted our Mexican horses to ride from one mine to another, up and down the comparatively barren looking hills, and along their ridges; now and then trotting or galloping, and now and then clambering or dipping; and all in bright dry air. This was my first experience on a Mexican horse and saddle. I became accustomed to the saddle by degrees; much more so than I ever could have become to an Arabian saddle—an article which I utterly abjured upon the occasion of arranging for a journey on horseback from Damascus to Baalbec. Though these Arabian saddles are covered with red velvet, I never sat on anything more uncomfortable and, indeed, trying. They seem to me to throw you completely forward, and oblige you to hold your legs backward, and heels up, by force of the short and exalted tree. Now the Mexican saddle is peculiar enough; it is constructed with wood, and has a high pommel and a rather high tree.

But if you get one large enough for you, it does not turn out to be so uncomfortable, for the framework is carved something after the art of the well-known American wooden chairs, which, though of mere wood, are very easy. There is a wonderful quantity of arrangement for girthing and stirruping, and the stirrups themselves are large, convenient leather shoes, on which the whole sole of the foot most comfortably rests. They who have ridden at a monotonous pace for long hours over a rough country, well know what support this class of stirrup affords. I can readily suppose that our own saddles and stirrups would not quite suit Mexico. In Brazil, however, we never used anything else. In that country some of the stirrups are made only large enough to contain the naked great toe; and I have often seen a large tall rider swing up to his saddle, with a spring from that strange fulcrum. Thus the various toes and stirrups of mankind may engage the attention of inquiring travellers. The Mexican horses are small and excellent, as a rule. They very much recalled those I had met with in Montevideo and Buenos Ayres. Perhaps they may be a little more fiery, but they only want quiet treatment. Their bits are savage, and you must take great care not to fancy you have only our own double bridle in hand, or you may pull them backwards before you are aware that you are threatening to break their lower jaw with the ring. At one unguarded moment, I found my horse and myself standing bolt

upright, like a larch tree. I must say it seems to me that, as a general rule, the Mexican can never leave his horse alone. Nine out of ten are always figuring; and often they will exhibit great offence if even a slight stumble is perpetrated in passing over some apparently impossible mass of stones, which a Leicestershire man would as soon ask his hunter to venture on as he would shoot him through the head. In go the spurs, snatch goes the bit, and the animal bucks and jumps and rushes before you, dancing on high, with his legs cutting all the x's and z's in the air that you can imagine.

My friend, Mr. Turnbull, who has lived all his life in Mexico, and with whom I had a splendid gallop a day or two afterwards, never would allow of my criticisms in this regard; and on my pointing out to him one (as it seemed to me) excessive exhibition of a proceeding as above described (he will forgive my joke) he replied, "My good friend, he is teaching him to be quiet!" Now, when we rode as boys, I remember we were always enjoined to be quiet ourselves. The Mexican, however, in his own style, is a thorough rider, thoroughly at home on horseback; and when you see him, as you often do, jogging down the San Francisco in the capital with all his horse-trappings, his tight yellow trousers with some several pounds' worth of silver buttons all down his leathered legs, his very broad brimmed hat, with a heavily-worked silver band and tassel about it, his

scrape and his lasso to boot, it is worth while turning your eye after him as he goes by. This sort of dress, let me here remark in passing, was affected by Maximilian; but I fear that it nought availed to persuade many among Mexicans that it was anything more than an outside show of sympathy and perhaps of vanity.

Among our visits we paid one to a mine which is some day to prove as rich as it is deep; and that is something to assert, for the first shaft measures nine hundred and seventy feet, and then there is another of about half that depth. We had been joined by a mining captain, Mr. Rabling; and on arriving at the mouth—you may say, the mouth—Mr. Turnbull and he prepared to go down. As I had neither a "bar," nor a quarter "bar" in the enterprise, and as I was neither an "aviadór" nor "an aviádo" (all which terms I will presently explain), and as the sort of dress, particularly the boots they had to put on, were of the harshest character, and moreover, as there was neither a Cacahuamilpa nor an Adelsberg to see below, I calmly consented to attend in company with Mr. Jackson, any report which, on their return upwards, they might "make to the Meeting. They two, therefore, descended into the bowels of the earth, each carrying a candle on the top of his cap, as I have seen the miners do in Cornwall, and departing with the simple injunction that they should come up safely again, and not keep us too long waiting for breakfast before they did so.

I was curious to see how they were tied on to the great rope, because I remember, some few years ago, being myself let down into that most astonishing region, the salt mines near Cracow under Wilitzca—a really interesting exploration. The methods were not precisely the same. There, each person had a strong three cornered piece of sacking to sit upon, with suspending ropes, something like a child's inverted silver-paper parachute; and the united ends of these were firmly bound round the large rope. When we were all thus tied—six in all, of whom three were ladies—we were hoisted up like a great bunch of grapes, to allow the two great lips of the great mouth to be opened beneath us. This having been accomplished, we were then lowered down into the throat, and the lips closed over us. But though in passing afterwards from chamber to chamber, and gallery to gallery we accomplished a descent of, I think, some twelve hundred feet, the shaft itself stopped at a mere depth of one hundred and fifty feet. Here, there was no such seat; but each person was literally tied and bound to the large rope; in such a way, however, that he could repose, and could not possibly part from his thread of life. The shaft was quite open, cut in a clean parallelogram, and well lined with the usual timbering.

Now, it often happens in trite affairs, and surely must do so in great ones, that on reflecting on something you have done, the memory conjures up a figure of

it which makes you wonder how you could have done it. I have now and then wondered a little how I could have responded to the foreman's invitation, after some few minutes had passed, to come and take hold of a large fixed rope hanging from above, and lean forward over the great mouth to see the two candles dancing in the deep dark on their way down to the bottom. But this I did, the mouth being perfectly level with the ground. As I had never seen anything of the kind on such a scale before, I appreciated the sight with all the childhood of inexperience; for at any age, and on any subject, inexperience is but another word for childhood. The lights grew smaller, but still they were as bright as ever; and, while I looked, it crossed my mind that here was a good illustration of what our astronomers maintain, that however far we might be removed from the sun, he still being visible, his brilliancy would remain undimmed, though his disc would be diminished. At Guanahuato, in order to astonish strangers, they sometimes set a large truss of straw in flames, and send it roaring down the shaft to show its form and depth.

The men in the yard were busily employed in breaking and grouping the ore, masses of which were continually coming up, packed in green ox skins, which appear capable of bearing an immense strain upon them. And at about every third arrival, a bag of some particularly good quality was separately packed.

Our friends having again emerged from their sepulchre, looking much more like exhumed bodies than risen spirits, brought reports as silvery as ever fell from lips of chairman to delighted and applauding shareholders. But, alas! I was only an outside visitor. A wondrous meat pie having been provided on the spot by an English dame, we breakfasted with some other mining captains, and rode home.

On asking what the ropes were made of, supposing the answer would be that they were of choicest hemp, I was surprised to hear that there was no hemp in them. They were made of the maguey, or aloe, a species of the plant that gives the pulque, of which anon. This maguey is a wonderfully useful plant!

On the following morning we started in our carriage with five mules, two wheelers, called the "tronco," and three leaders, here called "guias," but in Portuguese "sorta." This is the style in which private teams are driven through Mexico, and to and fro between Tacubaia and so forth, over the wretched roads. I have never seen in Mexico four horses put together as ours are. In order to reach Real del Monte our "five" had to take us over the brow or water-shed of the intervening range, and such is the general height of the lands here that we reached 10,500 feet, or little short of the altitude of Mount Etna, above the sea, in so doing. The change in the country was instant and somewhat startling. While all on the side of Pachuca had been barren

and of a mining complexion, all on the side of Real del Monte was green and fertile, and adorned with trees. Beautiful woods, indeed, appeared as we descended towards the town, which might almost be said to nestle among them,

"Bosomed high in tufted trees."

The town presents, however, a more or less naked looking group of houses and churches, much of which effect arises from the cold look of cubic formed buildings, without the forehead, as it were, of the roof.

We stopped at a very pleasant house, famous for two or three features: a very hospitable host, Professor Chester; comfortable beds; an excellent table, including sugar-cured (and therefore not Club) ham; a very pretty terraced garden, and three large savage dogs. These would not bear even the look of us in the open balcony, but showed their three huge brindled forms, and barked with great indignation.

After breakfast and a walk in a terraced garden, crowded with flowers, we drove down to a hacienda which is called Regla, after an ancient family of that name, who realized a vast fortune. It now belongs to the Rio del Monte Company. The drive was full of beauty; the road lying through a long, narrow, green, and rocky gorge, from which we at length emerged on the hacienda. Regla is a crushing and reducing establishment, and on mounting the veranda, I found myself gazing upon an extensive treading-

ground of mud below, horses being driven about, while men were wheeling barrows to and fro over planks. All this was sufficiently novel to me, but what astonished me far more was the vast perpendicular wall of tall compact basaltic columns stretching along the whole length of this ground. But here was only a part of this geological wonder. For on walking out together, by invitation from the host, to see the estate, we passed the crushers, and began to mount another gorge, through which the river runs that serves the works; and here in this romantic scene I witnessed a further vast development of these basaltic columns. On our right they rose in an enormous wall, which was repeated on the opposite side of the stream by masses of columns not so high, but twisted into every curve, and, in one part, lying horizontally with their ends apart from one another. At the top of the gorge there was a waterfall, of which Nature really seemed to have capriciously made a picture; for the basaltic columns, converging towards a centre, curved in ribs like a scallop-shell, leaving just good room for the water to pour through over a flat opening. I was told that these basaltic columns are to be seen for miles down stream. Speaking of those I saw, I can truly say that having seen the specimens of this formation which are to be found at our wonderful Staffa, and Giant's Causeway, and at Le Puys, in France, none of these can bear comparison, as regards masses, with those I saw at Regla.

Now, among all this remarkable scenery, there was a man engaged in a very singular occupation ; he was hammering a huge length of one of the basaltic columns into thick blocks. We know that this can be easily done; indeed at Staffa and the Giant's Causeway some of the columns have come to pieces naturally. It seemed in itself a mere piece of voluntary barbarous iconoclasm ; and though it was not quite that, yet, at all events, the act admitted only of a somewhat barbarous explanation. These blocks were to be used for grinding the ore, after passing the crushers ! And, accordingly, when we returned to the works, and passed through them, we saw the mode of applying these blocks. They are rudely tied by a cord, and are run round and round in a broad trough of water and ore, to reduce the latter to the required fineness, and for this I suppose, they are qualified. Such is one of the processes in the extracting of silver that is still carried on in the wealthy mines of Mexico, while the machinery at Pachuca lies abandoned, and seems likely so to lie !

As to the whole process I have not the least intention of describing it here ; suffice it to say that when the basaltic blocks have done their best, the ground ore finds its way out into the great treading yard. There, quicksilver and sulphate of copper are mixed with it, and horses are driven to and fro over the mess as we have seen them being driven round and round to thresh corn. Men, also, were at work after the same fashion, under roofing, recalling, but by

violent antithesis, the treading of the wine-press! Men and horses of course suffer by this ugly and incomplete process; their feet and legs become gradually paralyzed, and the men are subjected at last to great trembling of the nerves, and thousands of ingots escape reduction and are lost. In this respect surely Mexico is calling aloud for machinery, and for those who could erect and drive it. Some will tell you that no better process of reducing has yet been discovered, nor can be. Yet it is openly confessed (and this should appear conclusive) that numbers of people gain their living by eliminating the silver from the water that has already run through the process. Is it, then, absolutely impossible to eliminate the metal thoroughly? If not, then Mexico, with all her well-known metallic produce and exportation, is in the course of losing millions.

Thus we spent the afternoon; and the next morning was appointed for our ride to see the great Barranca. This word signifies (it will be remembered) a vast cleft or valley between the mountains, giving an appearance of the earth having been torn widely asunder. At the bottom of this gorge a winding river runs furiously or calmly, as the clouds command. We rode towards it, mounting upon its margins, through rugged by-ways, to a boundless wild park of green galloping ground, adorned with clumps of trees and woods, and sprinkled all over with groups of cattle and horses. Nothing could be grander; the

river lay some two thousand feet below us—that depth was given me and I can hardly doubt it—and from some points we could take a long perspective view of its winding course for miles. The barranca here is called the "barranca of Mestitlan," but it is of immense size and length, comprehending various branches; and it is from time to time called by the various names of the places that lie in its line. It eventually runs out towards Tampico. It is said to be beautiful everywhere, and even more beautiful than in the surprising region where we saw it. Our horses were as lively on the occasion as ourselves, and I never had a finer gallop over grass, to which on this vast extent there seemed to be no boundary to force a pull up.

To the striking scenery in these districts, I must add a beautiful walk we enjoyed through woods of singing birds at the neighbouring hacienda of San Miguel, where we were entertained at breakfast to our perfect satisfaction; an expression which, for one or two of us, may perhaps convey a great deal. Afterwards, we visited the country residence of the resident director of the Real del Monte Company, and stopped to call at the hacienda Velasco, where what is termed the "wet process" is pursued. Here an apparently great improvement upon the basaltic-block system of grinding the ore appears, in the working to and fro of segments of broad steel wheels. Here, also, there appeared to be much superior general apparatus; and

here it seems that I incurred the supreme contempt of a chattering old man, who belonged to nobody in the place, for remarking to him on the great size of the fly-wheels. This was Mr. Turnbull's joke against me, the old man having portentously whispered to him his contempt for the strange gentleman, and the sad just cause of it. But, after all, there was nothing very singular about this in a narrow life amidst Mexican mines. How often, in the active world, we are apt to suppose people ignorant who don't know something that we do, forgetful that they may know a hundred and fifty things that we don't.

Evening was now closing in, and the shadows were darkening as we drove back again up the beautiful narrow wooded gorge to Real del Monte, where we found our host with a pleasant bright room and a dinner ready for us. Even the huge brindled animals were not unwilling to acknowledge that we had been introduced to them, and admitted that we were entitled to throw them something now and then from the dinner-table, as they looked in at the open door, or even condescended to come quite inside to accept of it.

On the next day there was more visiting of mines, and we inspected all the extensive workings of the famous Santa Gertrudes. Connected with the vast wealth of this apparently inexhaustible lode a curious tale was recounted to me, showing how insolent as well as how kind Fortune, or Fate, or Chance, or

whatever other impersonation you like to invent for the course of circumstances, may be. Similar contrarieties have perhaps happened in mines more often than in other enterprises or pursuits.

A Mr. Auld had made up his mind that there must be a vast mine of silver ore in the San Gertrudes. So, under this impression, he set to work to find it, and laid out money and applied labour, until his heart gave way, and he abandoned the work, submitting to his loss. There the mine lay, I know not exactly how long, when some one again moved in the matter, and the present proprietors eventually took up the same idea that had influenced Mr. Auld. Possessing themselves duly of the property, they began to work. And behold! at the length of only fifteen yards—that was the length given me—they struck upon the *bonanza;* a word which means prosperity in the dictionary, but which, in mining, means the lode, the riches! And these proprietors are wealthy, and the mine is vast and in active work; and Mr. Auld, I was told, died poor! Still, the present proprietors, or one, at all events, had been working hard at mines for years; and thus he claimed his reward at last. But that which was life to him was death to Auld; and Auld, moreover, had done his work for him. I need not quote the "*Sic vos,*" etc., for the reader will be already repeating it to himself.

The same sort of story might be told concerning the "Rosario" mine, at Pachuca. There the works were

undertaken by an English company, who, after spending vast sums of money, abandoned it. The Mexican company, the Real del Monte, afterwards continued the explorings, and obtained a fortune out of it. Is it not often startling to reflect that when we make a good shot for ourselves, it is almost always because somebody else has made a bad one for himself; and that what is satisfying and advancing us is prejudicing and perhaps ruining others! "Captain," said an old lady at sea—it is always an old lady—"how thankful we ought to be for this beautiful wind and currrent in our favour!" "I can have no objection to that sentiment at the present moment, ma'am," was the reply, "but what are they saying who are going in the opposite direction?"

"Aye, there's the rub,"

as Shakespeare very emphatically, but very inelegantly expresses himself.

The pleasant breezes that blew upon us as we rode back to Pachuca were not, I am fain to think, doing harm to any one. We had intended leaving on the following morning for Ometusco and Mexico, but the resident director of the company, Señor, Don José de Landero y Cos was urgent that Mr. Jackson should breakfast with him and the Señora, and bring his friends. To this there could be but one response; and accordingly we were most handsomely received and entertained, a numerous and distinguished party being invited to meet us, and the

easy and engaging manners of the Mexicans at table ornamenting hospitality.

Thus passed another day and another night at Pachuca, nor will I forget a good honest evening tea, with thick bread and butter, with an English miner and his wife. On the morrow we returned to Mexico.

I have mentioned the words "barras" and "aviadóres," and "aviádos," and have promised to explain their meaning. The usual mode of starting a mine in Mexico is this: the property is divided into twenty-four portions, which are called "barras," meaning literally bars. Then the owners part with a certain number, according to arrangement, of these barras, to a company who are to take the whole responsibility of proving the property. These working shareholders are called the aviadóres, or the providers; they are the bees, in fact. The owners, meanwhile, lie still, and neither do nor suffer in the matter; and these are called the aviádos, or the provided for; they are the drones. Supposing the mine to prove no mine, then the aviadóres lose their money, and the aviádos pay only the not very ruinous item of Christian sympathy; but supposing the mine turns out a mine of wealth, then the aviadóres are entitled first to recoup themselves all their outlay with interest; after which the aviádos come in to a share of profits with them, according to the number of the barras they have retained. Where mines turn out to be really valuable, these barras are bought and

sold in halves and quarters, and even eighths, for considerable sums of money.

On leaving our tramway and rejoining our Diligencia, my recollection was forcibly recalled to the difference between the roads I had seen and those among the mining districts, which are very good. In point of fact, it is indispensable that they should be so. It would otherwise be impossible to carry about the weighty ore for reduction, or the metal after it was reduced. And not only so, but good roads among the mines show that where there is wealth and activity, there will be means of communication, and that bad roads signify a poor and an incompetent population. The waggons are generally drawn by ten or twelve mules, and the weight they manage is thirty cargas, or about nine thousand pounds of metal. The tangled mass of chains and spread bats that rattle among them, and lie all among their legs and hoofs when any stoppage in the traction occurs, would stupefy any aristocratic waggon-driver in England; and only mules could keep their legs clear of them. All, however, adds to the picturesque, as what does not that is inconsistent with economy and utility?

This excursion to Pachuca and Real del Monte, with friends and under circumstances very favourable for appreciation and enjoyment, appeared to me to be sufficient for satisfying my curiosity as to a mining district in Mexico. On my journey to Querétaro it was urged on me, when I had determined to go

there, to continue further on to Guanajuato, which is a still greater mining district, I believe ; and even Zacatecas was hinted at. I declined both, as being beyond the scope of my intentions and not calculated to add any novelty to what Pachuca and Real del Monte had shown me. I should have been without friends and introductions, and I am quite sure the country could not have exhibited such geological attractions as did these last mentioned districts. At the same time, had the water volcano (as it is called) at Guanajuato chosen to shoot up the stones and hot fountains with which it is credited, at the moment of my visit, I should have witnessed something that Pachuca could not show me, and have found a counter-recollection to that of Vesuvius. Very soon the Central Railway, which took me towards Querétaro (being the line to which I should myself attach great importance as regards the opening of the heart of the country, through the English line, to Vera Cruz upon the coast, and to New York through the American systems that come down to Paso del Norte), will be open ; and by and by the works will be thence carried on to Guanajuato and Zacatecas, as well as to other districts in that direction.

CHAPTER VIII.

HACIENDAS.

I WAS anxious to realize hacienda life in Mexico, for more reasons than one. Naturally, I wished to know what it was in itself, and secondly, I was curious to be able to compare it with what I had seen in Brazil. This comparison might be exact as regards two leading products in both countries: coffee and sugar; and might afford also an interesting approximate one as regards the two different classes of labour on the estates; that of the negro, or slave in Brazil, and that of the (so-called) Indian, or free native in Mexico. By the introduction of my friend, Mr. Allsopp, I paid two visits with him to the hacienda San Antonio, near Mexico; and with my friend, Mr. Jackson, I visited the two haciendas, Las Animas and Jasmine, near Orizaba. San Antonio lies close upon the road, and almost close under the hills, between the towns of San Angel and Tlalpam; and it is reached by means of a tramway, on which you travel, as indeed you do upon all the Mexican tramways, admirably. The line runs first to Tacubaya, which lies beyond Chapultepec, and

thence continues in the direction of St. Angel, where it takes a curve round the base of the mountains for Tlalpam. But we devoted one morning to Tacubaya, which I cannot but remember as a very charming suburb of Mexico; and here Mr. Allsopp is domiciled. It has its ugly associations with the slaughter of prisoners, perpetrated there by General Marquez during the war of the empire; and it has its own pleasing features in gardens, trees, and villas. Whenever I mention these words, however, it must not be imagined that the description of "trim" and "neat," can be applied to either. There is a sort of loose profusion of growth in all these very fertile countries with only small populations.

Bearing this in mind, I will say that I was particularly struck with the two properties of the families Escandon and Barron at Tacubaia. The dwelling in the first property is luxuriously furnished, and it stands in a large shrubbery and garden, full of all varieties of blooming shrubs and flowers. The second is large, but in inferior repair; the owner living, I believe, in Paris. But what struck me very much indeed was the view of Mexico, with the surrounding country and mountains, as seen from the first-floor balcony of this chateau. Mexico is distant enough to show in prominence its churches only, of which there are many, and among which rises the cathedral in chief. It is always the churches that make a city in the prospect look well, even though these buildings,

when you are close to them, are unattractive and even ugly. Then, again, the view is to my mind finer than that from Chapultepec; for Chapultepec itself comes into it as a fine object; and in this foreground the trees and the green meadows, with a piece of distant water, combine to charm the eye. How different is the air out here from that we breathe in the city! Nor is this spot without an association, which might sanctify it with some whom I know; for these gardens were a chosen spot with Maximilian, who would very often wander through them alone, reminded perhaps of Miramar, which he never should have left; and a little anecdote was told me concerning him here, that he one day gave a watch to the steward, as a friendly acknowledgment of the pleasant hours he had passed, in solitary communion with his own reflections.

Our first visit to San Antonio was made on a Sunday, but as there was no one, or very few, at work on that day, it was arranged that we should come again on a week day, particularly as I wished to see the operations on the aloe, or pulque plant, when being prepared for yielding the juice. This hacienda belongs to a family of the name of Buch—two brothers—and spreads over twenty-five thousand acres. Many families would be astonished to hear that two married brothers live together in perfect harmony, with I know not how many of their married sons and daughters. However this may be, our

Sunday table was (I may say) loaded with family guests, a majority of whom were ladies; and the greatest harmony prevailed among them all. After breakfast I was taken a drive over part of the property in one of the carriages; and here I recognized that perfect liberty that I have been so accustomed to witness as belonging to hacienda life. You have horses and saddles and bridles and carriages at instant command. But they need not be west-end-groomed horses, or west-end saddles, or shining bits; nor need your coachman be in smart livery; nor do your horses, nor does your carriage, require a good road or constant washing. But all is there nevertheless; easily at command and comfortable; and away you go, over soft turf, under trees, across grips, into a field, out again, and round about, and home. This is what we did on that Sunday afternoon, and returned to Mexico, leaving a happy family behind. The two snow mountains shone gloriously out in the sky.

And here I must not forget to mention the bright and many-coloured crowds of people whom we met at San Angel, all enjoying their holiday, and offering a sufficient explanation of there being no one at work on the Sunday. People under bright skies generally look happy and comparatively thoughtless, or (say) light of heart, and particularly so when they are carrying fruits and flowers, as they were here, the tuna and the strawberry being abundant among the fruits.

Our next visit was on a Friday, when the table

was less numerously adorned with happy faces, and we went out expressly to see the cutting of the aloe, or maguey, for pulque.

Although this hacienda is not one of the very large pulque properties, seeing that its chief productions consist in abundant cereals, besides cattle, yet there was quite enough going on with pulque to show me all I wanted to know about that national drink. The first order of battle was to march forth and choose out the victim of the day. This we presently came upon, being an aloe of considerable size, and declared on inspection to be ripe for cutting. The first act was to rob the victim of all his thorns, and this the attacker did by running his large sharp knife up both sides of every leaf. Having thus disarmed him, the cutter literally mounted into the huge plant, and I followed him; and it was really a sight to watch him hack away with force all the centre, leaves and heart, scooping out at last a large hollow well in the beautifully white inside. This well is not quite formed on the first cutting; but it is perfected some few days afterwards, and then there begins to run into it from the plant an intensely sweet juice, which some say acts as a strong cathartic, while others say they habitually drink it; so that there must be very different stomachs in Mexico! The mode in which the plant yields is remarkable. This sweet juice must be taken out two or three times a day, and will thus produce nearly a gallon in all. Its removal is managed by its being

sucked into a large tube or horn, and carried home; and if he who thus draws it out be one of those who believe in its above imputed quality, he will very conscientiously abstain from imbibing any of his master's property. This operator is called a tlachiquero, the juice being called tlachique.

But it is not only for one day, or week, or month that this daily process is continued. In this hacienda (though others exceed or fall short of the like produce) a good plant will go on yielding after this fashion for three months, and a very good one for four; and the average value of the produce of each plant may be stated at about ten pesos, or two sovereigns. The plant requires but little cultivation, and matures in about seven years. This class of farming is held to be very profitable. In the course of cutting our present victim, my attention was attracted by the dropping out of the centre of one of the thick leaves an enormous white caterpillar. "Oh yes," said my friend, "the poor people cook and eat those things, and they are very nourishing." I thought of the large white snail among us in England, of which the same is said, and shuddered. Nor was this the only thing, by the way, that made me shudder; for as we were walking back among the long grass, a very active snake jumped about our legs. Having been accustomed to fazendas where the cascavella, or rattle-snake, the jararaca, and other equally engaging reptiles are rife, I shouted for the large knife to the

man close behind, but to my astonishment was greeted with friendly derision. A small fact in natural history was then told me to enlighten my ignorance: "a poisonous snake," said my host, "is a thing unknown throughout the hacienda!" On such a presumption, however, I should decline to act all over Mexico. From the grounds we returned to the buildings, and went to examine the pulque brew-house. The brewing occupies but a few days, and consists of simple fermentation; and the liquor must be consumed in a few days, also, for it will not keep. Some of the old, or *madre* pulque is mixed with the tlachique, to ensure a good and rapid fermentation. This process takes place in large open ox-hides, set out upon a frame of four supports, and presenting a large bowl shape. By way of supposed improvement on these seemingly rude vessels, earthenware pans were contrived, some of which I saw empty in this hacienda; for I was told that the pulque would not work so well in them as in the skins, and that the skins were therefore still used in preference. Various blendings of pulque may take place to satisfy the artistic palate for home consumption; for good judges of pulque claim as much high art as do good judges of Burgundy at some of our tables; and perhaps a good taster in the preparing of pulque might claim equal importance with a good taster in the preparing of champagne! Every hacienda that produces pulque is proud of its own "cru."

Now, the cultivation of this aloe, or maguey, which, as I say, matures in about seven years, being so very simple, and the process of brewing the pulque so very simple, the question would appear to be of small importance; but I have somewhat minutely described the whole proceeding, because the consumption of pulque in Mexico city and in the neighbourhood, and also wherever else it is to be found, is not only enormous, but the drink itself is really a material element in the life of the people. What is it when prepared? Its colour is something like that produced by the putting of a very mild portion of milk into a good deal of water—less of the former than we used to get at school. It looks something like barley water. Its leading flavour, so far as I have any right to speak of it, is sour; but as I never could persuade myself to pass any actually down my throat I cannot affect much critical tasting experience. My aversion to it was compound: I did not like the plant; I did not like the colour; and the sour sort of flavour obstinately associated itself with the flavour of a sour cloth; though, to be sure, I have never really tasted such a thing! This strong aversion is not uncommon at first starting, though perhaps my own was uncommonly strong. Many begin by dislike and end by fondness. It is extremely wholesome when drunk discreetly, and of a fair quality, and they who once fall into the general use of it cannot go without it. It is a recorded fact, moreover,

that when, during the struggles that occurred between 1818 and 1821, at which latter date Mexico was eventually declared independent of Spain, the Spaniards were persecuted and ordered out of the country, certain of them pleaded to the authorities for leave to remain, on the ground that they could not live without their pulque. However trite such a petition may at first sight appear, reflection will suggest that no mere trite petition would have been ventured on. Medical certificates were indeed given to support the application, which generally succeeded.

It is not enough to say that pulque is the national beer; it is really much more. It is food, drink, and indeed, medicine, to thousands of the people. It is, of course, intoxicating if taken in excess. Mexicans as well as Indians feed upon it, and so eager are the public for it, that while it is necessary in the case of milk to send it to market, people come to the haciendas themselves to fetch their pulque. At the San Antonio it was freely drunk at table, quite pure. Sometimes it is mixed wth other more inviting materials, and I never can forgive myself for being unable to drink of it, when Mrs. I'Anson once took the trouble to have it dressed up for me in the most enticing form. Several bottles of it, of a pink colour, appeared upon the table; and this quantity was explained by the servants being so fond of the drink that whenever they are ordered to prepare pulque they most conscientiously devote all their

energies to the production of more than a hospitable quantity.

I have already alluded to the extensive fields of the maguey along the line of railway, and on the plains of Apam especially. But these lands are only a part of the square leagues in the valley in which the plant grows, as it does also in many other parts of Mexico. From a smaller plant of the maguey there is also a very strong spirit extracted, called tequila, which resembles the kummel in Norway. I have already spoken of the ropes manufactured from the plant; and such is the strength of the fibre that I was told at one of the haciendas that a strong leaf would resist and throw a horse set galloping with a cord tied to it. For the shareholders in the English line, however, it would be chiefly interesting to know that special pulque trains are run every day; that before twelve o'clock, as a rule, every drop of pulque has been bought up in the city; that the cultivation is continually increasing to meet the increasing consumption, and that even now as much as $1000, or £200 a day, in other words, £73,000 a year, is the item returned for freight on pulque.

It was amusing to hear of some of the well-known grumblings about the railway freights for carrying the pulque. Those whose haciendas are far off are pleased, for they can send their produce more easily to market; those whose haciendas are near don't like the new invasion, because it brings in competitors,

and grudge the freights. This is always one of the results of easy means of communication. The whole agricultural and commercial world of nations has felt, and is still more and more feeling, the countless consequences, direct and indirect, of new veins and arteries being opened by land and sea, nor have the ultimate results yet been imagined. Mother Earth is thus being replenished and subdued by her child, man, whom she seems to have produced to cut and score her surface for his own purposes in the most unfilial manner. But are we consistent in complaining one against another? We carry some of our exalted theories far beyond the realms of actuality, and in the above example we may find a similarity with a thousand others small and great. We theorize about some bright and happy equality that is to exist among us all some day; we can find even unconscious prophecy in the Pollio, and we ingeniously attempt to apply it. Such are we in our dreams; but the appearance of the only material means for the bringing about the reality we anticipate —the unity and fraternity of all—seems productive of sentiments not very intimately connected with harmony of hearts.

Pulque is by no means the only or the chief produce of the San Antonio. All the cereals abound in profusion—wheat, barley, oats, maize, and beans. Cattle, likewise, form a considerable item. All these grow well, as indeed the size of the barns, which are

annually filled, attests. I think the maize in general is even finer than that in São Paulo, which is very fine. Wheat is good; oats and barley I thought rather small. The beans, the eternal dry beans, without whose presence under their charming name, *frijoles*, no meal could be complete, these are excellent. In Brazil they are called *feijão*, and there, when compounded with the savoury but somewhat coarse *carne secca*, of which I saw none here, the dish is a very favourite one under the name of *feijoada*. I was always very fond of the feijão, and greeted them as frijoles here in Spanish. In Mexico they feed the horses on barley, as they do in Spain, and get all the more work out of them. They are also beginning to use barley for malting; but as yet their beer is very thick and poor. For me it must stand by the side of pulque. These matters must improve. The Americans have brought in their St. Louis beer, and England is meanly represented by no other than the stone-bottle stuff of Tennant. The price of a (so called) pint of these beers stands in a somewhat inverse proportion to their qualities—four reales, or two shillings; sometimes five, or two and sixpence are asked for the small bottles. What are our good brewers about? But I suppose in this, as in all new countries, import duties are enormous. I know they were extremely heavy in Brazil; but there we paid only about two shillings for a whole bottle at the hotels and bars.

Of the Indians, as workmen, I received the best accounts. I missed entirely the grouping of them together, like a sort of small flock, here and there, which you may always observe in a Brazilian fazenda, when they move about under their "feitor," or overseer; but there was quite as much of the apparently instinctive appreciation of the superiority of the white man. Running, as well as walking, they never pass their master, or receive an order from him, without their cap in hand; there pervades that same natural aptness to receive command which is expressed in the well-known phrase, "I say unto one, go and he goeth; and to another, come, and he cometh; and to my servant, do this, and he doeth it." All this goes on without the slightest sign or need of harshness; and the system which prevails in this hacienda may be taken as typical of what goes on elsewhere.

So far as the immediate interests of the masters are concerned, nothing can be more convenient. But in view of the advance of the nation in its intrinsic capacity to govern and improve itself, financially, socially, and intellectually, it must be obvious that all this quiet, unambitious and submissive nature is but illustrative of what has been intimated of these good people—that little or no help can be looked for among them. And one other unhappy circumstance must be added also: their minds are, of necessity, of that class in which superstition dominates.

Such were my experiences of the hacienda of San

Antonio, and of the good family Buch. Happier than they are, I need not wish them to be; more hospitable to a guest they cannot be!

The two other haciendas that I visited with Mr. Jackson were both in the neighbourhood of Orizaba; one lying about ten miles beyond that station on the line, and the other lying some miles from it up country. The first is called Las Animas, and is a coffee and cattle estate of considerable extent and capabilities; it belongs to the Señores Don Vivanco and Escandon. The second is called Jasmine, and is a sugar and cattle estate, also of considerable extent and capabilities. This belongs to Señor Don Escandon. On Las Animas there was a young Englishman domiciled, a Mr. Tomblin, who was also engaged in the management. In both these haciendas, it must be understood, there was the same atmosphere of liberty and country hospitality that I have already spoken of; but the Señors were not surrounded with families.

At Las Animas, after breakfasting in the veranda with all nature bright, mild and cheerful around, we mounted our horses and rode through some large coffee plantations. In comparing these with what I remember in Brazil, I noticed that the trees were equally vigorous, but that a great deal of overgrowth was allowed, which is quite unknown there. Even in some places the universally growing plátano, or banana tree, was permitted to almost entirely overshadow the coffee. I had observed the same on pass-

ing Cordova. Now, in Brazil, and I speak more particularly of the beautiful province of São Paulo, the fazendeiro (as he is there called), is as careful of cleanliness in his coffee plantations, as a good English farmer is of that in his wheat. He will not even allow the grass to grow very long without sending his gangs to hoe it all up. Much less will he allow actual overgrowth by any other tree. On asking the reason of what I saw here, I was told that the coffee trees required protection from the sun; yet, taking the several latitudes and altitudes into consideration, I could not quite compass this reason. However, the truth is, that the coffee trees were looking exceedingly healthy, and were well loaded with green berries for the coming season.

I was so struck with this appearance, that I made a point of going all through the stores to look at the picked coffee, and though I am no coffee planter or buyer, I thought I knew enough of what I saw to deem it worth while to bring some home with me. This, then, I arranged for, and I have now two sacks, one of the double-bean, and one of the perola, or single bean coffee. I have certainly found the flavour of both of a decidedly superior quality. Moreover, a friend of mine, a quondam shipper of coffee from Rio de Janeiro, who now contents himself with merely drinking it comfortably in London, specially invited one or two friends, myself among the number, and another coffee-shipper also, to test both these coffees, samples

of which I had presented to him, as I know him to be a good judge. He is also very fastidious about his coffee, and like myself, always has it roasted at home. This was done in the present case, and we all agreed that both were first class coffees. As regards the perola, indeed, he ranked it with the best Java that he is in the habit of drinking. Mexico, with fitting population, could produce an unlimited quantity of coffee. She has coffee grounds in all parts, and coffee trees in comparatively very few. This is a question of overwhelming importance to her, considering what a large market for coffee exists among her northern neighbours. And all who have an interest in Mexico have a right to augur the most promising results from an extended cultivation of this plant. Coffee-tree sticks are sold in Mexico; and under the arcades of the Plaza I purchased one of most unusual dimensions.

But in this hacienda I saw a sight more novel to me than coffee-trees and coffee, which was the chasing and the lassoing of a bull. Having expressed a desire to witness this proceeding, the administrator at once gave orders for the necessary men to appear, and we again mounted our horses. Mr. Tomblin was suddenly very much on the alert, and carried his lasso with him; I soon understood why. We rode out altogether (the mayor-dómo and all needful men attending, and properly equipped), into a vast undulating pasture-ground, in which there were bulls

near, and bulls far, and bulls away out of sight in the woods; and when we had reached a somewhat rising ground the men set up a strange, wild, mournful cry, not quite like a bull's, yet far less like a man's. What did this mean? It was the usual call to the scattered animals to come to eat their salt, which is given so many times a week, and of which, like horses and mules, they are very fond, deriving much benefit from it. The effect of the call upon them all was amusing. Head after head was gradually raised, near and far, and out of the woods came others following in the train; some galloping at last, for fear of being left behind. When they were all herded they found no salt, for it was not a salting day; and this seemed to astonish and disappoint them; nor can the false alarm be too often practised, for the bulls understand what it is to "cry wolf."

The business really intended then began. The administrator, Mr. Jackson, and myself, stood apart, while the others rode quietly into the group, which was more or less compact, to choose the fitting animal. Suddenly we saw them separate one, and set their horses to full gallop. The chosen victim was ready for them, and started at full gallop too. The art in these cases is to keep the bull straight, and with this in view, the three or four horses chase abreast, so as to prevent the animal from turning. Fortunately for my entertainment, however, one of the outside horses proved not to be quite swift

enough, and the bull succeeded in turning from the straight line, and running along a ridge that lay on the other side of a large dip between us and his majesty. The scene thus became most exciting, and was like a splendid course; only, it was with a bull and horses in Mexico, instead of with a hare and greyhounds in England. I could not have believed that a bull could give such a splendid chase for so long a distance, though this was as young and as compact as I have seen the bulls in the Madrid corrida, where, though they show great activity, they do nothing like this. He kept fast ahead, and made another bold curve to join the group, but being well turned here, he made for the hill where we were standing, and I half thought he was coming upon us, when, just as he was within some twenty yards of us, Tomblin threw the lasso over his horns, and wound the cord round the pommel of his saddle. Down came the animal with the shock; the horse expecting it, and setting himself to resist it, like a man. The other lassos were then thrown and by degrees adjusted round his legs and body. Finally he was laid under a tree to cool before he was killed. And so ended this novel and exciting chase.

"But," said I, "do you eat bull's flesh?"

"You have already done so this morning," said the administrator.

"Well, then," I replied, "I never did so before, but now I am quite ready to do so again."

This lassoing of the bull is a very dangerous proceeding for beginners. The moment the lasso is over his horns, and it is held to be awkward to throw it lower, the cord must be swiftly wound round the high wooden pommel of the saddle, so that the horse, who knows what is coming as well as the man does, may properly resist the shock and throw the bull. But in doing this the rider must beware of catching his fingers or his arm in the cord; for they would be cut in half as with a knife. Arms have been lost; and Tomblin showed me a very ugly mark upon his own from a cut suffered when he was a beginner.

As regards this eating of bull's flesh, it was quite new to me; but better meat I never wish to eat than the steak that was set before me at Las Animas. Thus we live and learn. I suppose I must have eaten it at Rosario and Cordova in the River Plate; but if so I did not know what I was doing; and very likely it is very often eaten in England, though we always hear of ox-beef, which no doubt almost universally appears in our kitchens. The only question I ever asked about bull's flesh was at Madrid, where I was told that the meat of the dead bull was very coarse, and was only given away, or sold very cheaply indeed to the poor. Certainly the cruel manner by which, in the Corrida de los toros, the animal is tormented to death (though I have confessed to have been present on two occasions) may throw it into such a fever that the meat may be unfit

for food. But even so, some of us may remember the hunting and hooting of bullocks up Holborn Hill from Smithfield, until that sacred and time-honoured scene of man and cattle martyrdom was transmuted into decent aspect by a revolutionary Act of Parliament; and, although those animals were shamefully tortured, their beef was eaten as good. As a curious instance of diversity of evidence (by the way), where all ought to be able to tell the same story, I may mention that, after my return from Mexico, on raising this question of the destiny of the bull's body at Madrid at a dinner table of Spaniards, in Surrey, I fairly divided the house upon the subject, and therefore I remain as uncertain as to whether they eat the bulls of the circus in Madrid as I am certain that they do so in the Mexican haciendas. I must, however, add that a friend tells me he has seen the flesh weighed out and sold at Malaga.

The second hacienda that we visited, Jasmine, is a sugar producing property, but it has its vast spread of cattle also. It belongs, like the other, to the family Escandon, and the equally courteous administrator, Señor Don Vivanco, is brother to the gentleman who entertained us at Las Animas. This hacienda, being situated up country and not along the line of railway, we went there on horseback; and our ride, for about eight miles, lay through beautiful green alleys, adorned on both sides with straggling growths, where nature, as usual in these soils and latitudes, seemed to be

flinging about her flowering trees and hedgerows at random. Jasmine reminded me more of Brazil than did Las Animas, for the house was not close to the boundaries.

After riding over open spaces and crossing small streams, and passing under high banks shaded with trees, we arrived at a large entrance wooden gateway sheltered with tiling and standing up alone; flanked not with walls or hedges but with two deep ditches on each side. Here we entered the domain, but, as is often the case in Brazil, we still had to ride very far along road and meadow alternately, until, while yet at some little distance from the house, we were met by Don Vivanco and friends who had ridden out, according to custom, expecting to meet us. After the usual hospitable breakfast we all mounted our horses again and rode over the extensive plantations. There could be no doubt of the health and strength of the sugar-cane, for the vast plantations of it were flourishing everywhere. In comparing the canes with those I remember in São Paulo, and with those which I had more lately seen in Egypt, where some of them are almost gigantic, I found those at Jasmine of a smaller type, and that they were planted much more closely together; and the one fact may perhaps explain the other. It was not, however, the sugar fields (cañares) alone that we saw; but, without speaking of the other general produce, we looked from a high ground over quite a small territory (so

to call it) which was calling for cultivation and only waiting to be asked, in order to give! while, in the prospect beyond, the mountains were throwing every beauty of light and shade about their elaborate forms that they could find an excuse for in the sun.

On afterwards visiting the sugar-house, or Ingenio, our eyes were regaled with the sight of some excellent machinery with which Don Vivanco had gradually supplied the hacienda, and which was working admirably; particularly so in the well-known centrifugal operation of flinging out the molasses from the granulated sugar, by the rapid rotatory motion of the containing perforated cylinders. The cane they were crushing was intended to serve merely for distilling purposes, the month of August not being the season for sugar making; but the juice was pouring out from between the rollers as abundantly as I have seen it elsewhere in that class of growth.

At this hacienda, as at Las Animas, we ran down a bull; but there was not the same strange wildness about the chase, and I need not repeat the scene. But I will mention that besides this mode of catching the animal, there is another of which I had not the chance of witnessing an exhibition. It is called "Collando" or catching by the cola, or tail, and is a most expert proceeding, both on the part of horse and man. It is one that may well serve to show what Mexicans can do on horseback. The bull is set running, as in the other case, and the pursuer

follows full gallop. So soon as he comes up close enough, he stoops down, catches hold of the bull's tail, lifts up one of his own legs out of the stirrup, thrusts the tail suddenly under it, and thus throws the bull with violence.

Poor animal bull! he is a very martial fellow, but never under any circumstances whatever to be trusted. His enemy, animal man, has always respected him, however, and has shown it in his pride of rearing him, and in the pomp and parade he makes in many capitals of fighting, tormenting, and slaying him. Nay more, among all the different gods that the human brain has invented for itself, since developing the capacity of imagination, the bull has appeared as a god, or as one representing a god; and I confess to have conceived for him a certain sort of new respect, since I visited the vast underground galleries of the Apis Mausoleum, with all its four and twenty rifled sarcophagi.

When we left the hacienda on our return the old compliment was paid to us that I so often have received in South America. We were accompanied to the great outer entrance of the estate by our host and friends, and there they bade us adieu. All this was done with that easy grace of courtesy and hospitality which is not inconsistent with rusty bits and stirrups, and which is now inseparably connected in my own mind with Mexican haciendas as well as Brazilian fazendas.

The life in these establishments, in one large dwelling, standing out alone, with its buildings about it, in the midst of its wide extending domain, appears to the visitor as one of great monotony, solitude, and silence. In reality it must for the most part be so; still, for those engaged there is always plenty in their own style of occupation to employ their minds. The dimensions are immense. So are they in Brazil—population in both countries being scant. In the latter country I remember a fazendeiro of Parana bringing out a huge map of his property, which looked something like the Empire of Russia, and boasting to me, while his son with pride confirmed him, that he possessed more land than he should ever manage to see: much less to till.

In Mexico, where all work is free, I should fancy life to be, in one respect, more trying than in Brazil, where all are slaves; for in the latter case there is a more collected centre of existence; there is more of the sense of one's own people gathering about you; there is a species of separate kingdom belonging to the owner, whose subjects, whose very property, his slaves are.

This feeling cannot exist where labour is free, though I have already said that in Mexico the Indian workman accepts the white man as very much his protector and superior, as one whom he is pleased to serve, and whom he is ready implicitly to obey. Again, on the other hand, there is something very

irksome in perpetual contact with the slave, as a slave, and in the want of servants with whom to associate, if only as master and man, yet with some greater scope of kindred freedom and sympathy than can possibly be felt towards an inferior race. There is something, moreover, demoralizing in not recompensing a workman for his work; in the bargaining for and buying him, or in hiring him and paying his owner instead of himself. I have heard fazendeiros in São Paulo speak of their weariness arising from these causes, and some who could command capital for that purpose have done their best to secure free labour by contract from Europe. A respected friend of mine of past days at Campinas, now the Baron Indaiatuba, has even made journeys to Europe for that purpose.

Still, in these Brazilian fazendas there is much content and much happiness, and the visitor rarely or never comes away without certain pleasant impressions. I have, myself, now and then passed some consecutive days in them, and have experienced, and particularly before railways brought them into closer and more rapid contact with the world, the sort of feeling I have referred to; I have felt that I was in a separate happy kingdom. Though among slaves, a certain tone of freedom and indolent liberty pervades the scene, reminding you of the description of life at his Sabine farm given by old Horace, who also kept his slaves, and to the ancient site of whose

retreat I made a pilgrimage with a friend some years ago. "Here we all are," he seems to say, "in our own community, simple and quiet in our modes of life; not worrying ourselves with luxuries and pomps, as do the slaves of their own slavish rules of more refined conventional existence. Our days and nights revolve, our suns rise and set, our moons go through their changes—

> "Truditur dies die,
> Novæque pergunt interire Lunæ."
>
> Day is pushed on by day,
> And new moons haste to fade away.

You see no suffering about you; and if there is really discontent, it must be very much concealed. Still you must remember that you are there for pleasure only, and not forced to stay. Yet the satisfaction that you feel is really begotten of what surrounds you. And, though the reflection is not exalting, you know that the black man is clinging to the white man for protection and sustenance. Therefore, even if there be something selfish in the thought, enjoy the moments while you may. There is a holiday brightness in the sun; there is a shady seat in the long open upper verandah; there is the orange garden to sit in, and to eat the golden apples at your leisure under the shadow of the trees you are despoiling, but which seem to spread out for your enjoyment; the master is about the grounds; the slaves are at their daily labour, picking or weeding,

as the season bids, and not unfrequently singing in the coffee plantations. You may read, or you may sleep; all are busy except yourself, and no one will interrupt you. Then, again, if it so please you, you may bathe in that rippling stream; or you may stroll and see the work; or you may venture a short intrusion into yonder great virgin forest, among those mighty trees, thickly hung with cepó parasites, that grow and hang like long ropes from the upper branches down to the very ground. Here you may affect to lose yourself, listening to the rustling of the leaves in their language which you cannot understand, or to the strange and sudden sounds from bird or animal that now and then reach you from the deep solitudes, while you nourish, as it were, a sense of timid awe, and ponder on the shrouding scene:

"non sine vano
Aurarum et siliiæ metu."

But remember! you are with slaves, and you are not a slave. And you would not that those about you should be slaves. But how is slavery to be put an end to? Not by prayers and pocket-handkerchiefs; not by sentimental denunciations that cost nothing, and are very often born of feelings that bloom only before a flattering public and are perhaps displaced by others at home. For myself, I would abolish slavery to-morrow, with the wand of Prospero, if I could; and perhaps would do so even more for the

sake of the white man than of the black. Slavery poisons labour; it makes the black man look on it as a disgrace, and makes the white man idle and selfish. It makes them both despise labour, as unworthy of a free man. And yet, there have been seen—I myself was in Paris in 1848, and saw—crowds of men, in their very fever of liberty and republicanism, going up to claim of the Provincial Government, even as the right of free citizens, that very labour which the institution of slavery has degraded into a curse and a disgrace. But if the poison is running through every artery of the body, how are you to eliminate it unless you draw out the blood also?

I am thinking of Brazil, at the present moment, whose fazendas came to my mind while visiting the Mexican haciendas. She really did much, when, through her late lamented and distinguished statesman, the Visconde do Rio Branco, she passed the law of the 28th of September, 1871. That law has been much misunderstood; it has been called an Emancipation Act, but it was not such. What that law enacted was this: that every child whatever, born a Brazilian subject after the date of it, should be born free. That was the great enactment. Hence it follows that the current of slavery is staunched; and in a country like Brazil, which is almost exclusively agricultural, and whose agriculture is almost exclusively carried on by slaves, this was a very

great and a very bold step to take. We have nothing like it to show among ourselves: our Act of Emancipation was but a Colonial question, important as it was; and we were already an old and wealthy nation. It remains to hope that, the ball having once been set rolling, it will not be made to roll too fast. But there is such a poetical love of the word liberty among Brazilians, that discretion may be overrun.

And there is a growing party there who, perhaps not giving themselves sufficient time to think of consequences, and perhaps uncurbed by any substantial interest in the question of emancipation, foment it eagerly. That slavery must one day cease in Brazil who can doubt? The question must be left to her own sons, among whom there is already quite fire enough to threaten rapid burning out of the hated monster.

As regards her fazendeiros, they are, as a rule, kind and respected masters; the fazendas are, for the most part, happy and contented little kingdoms; there is but little of that harsh distance and scorn which is said to have characterized our West Indian masters. But it would be against nature to suppose that the owners do not feel misgivings and reluctance to enlarge upon the subject. As regards statesmen, ministers, senators, and deputies, with whom I used to have the honour of holding many conversations, I can assure myself they are to-day mainly imbued with those feelings which inspired them to support

the minister when the law of the 28th of September, 1871, stamped immortality on his name. Upon the enlightened and liberal sentiments of His Imperial Majesty it is quite unnecessary to enlarge.

It would be out of place to pursue the subject further here. In the haciendas I have described above, the Indians, at all events, are free. Happy, thrice happy, Mexico!—in one great fact, at least—you have not the fire of emancipation to pass through.

CHAPTER IX.

TO QUERÉTARO.

I SHOULD never have forgiven myself had I left Mexico without making a journey to Querétaro. I don't know indeed that any one can ever really forgive himself for what he finds amiss in any past act or omission which it offends him to remember. I am not quite sure that we can ever really forgive one another; though, from a fear of offending ourselves by having been unforgiving, we may act as if we had forgiven. At any rate, it is a maxim with me that no man can ever forgive himself; and, moreover, I believe that to this fact is to be traced the keeping open of very many old sores which would otherwise have been healed and forgotten on both sides. I am not, however, about to write a chapter on this matter, but will merely frankly say that as I never should have forgiven myself, so I should have found it very hard to forgive any of my friends in Mexico, had I been over persuaded by them to relinquish Querétaro

In travelling and visiting sites, attractive in themselves, or by association, I have found it always neces-

sary to keep up a keen and constant recollection of my own feelings on the subject on arriving within gunshot of the object. For there you find the people who are domiciled in the neighbourhood, and perhaps wearily so, grown quite indifferent to its attractions, so that if you incautiously allow their dulled impressions to obliterate your own lively curiosity, and if that old feeling (as it is pretty sure to do) revives when you are again out of reach, and in the old scenes where it originated and in part prompted you to your travel, then you are left only to that barren and irritating retreat of the mind, called regret; and on this part of your recollections you have only to record against yourself a certain well-known deprecatory exclamation, containing a word whereof the use is frequent on idle lips, though it is said to put you in danger of what everybody, even if starving to death with cold, would unfeignedly decline to approach.

I was determined, mud and salteadóres notwithstanding, to make my journey. One friend challenged me with a pair of large mud boots, which I declined; another absolutely forced upon me a twenty-shilling watch, urging me to leave my own and its gold chain behind; and to this feeling of consideration for my property I responded as was due. So, making my way to the Despacho (as the office is called) of the Diligencias (as they are called), I asked for a Boleto (as the ticket is called) for Querétaro. It was not

simply asked for, given and paid for, but a sort of survey of the surrounding circumstances and probabilities were discussed, in which a frank confession was made of the unquestionable *incomodidades* of the journey at this time of the year.

Now for those who may recall merely the days of the Brighton four-horse coaches not twenty of the above words could convey a twentieth part of what inconveniences the best of Mexican road journeys in the best of seasons would entail; all that I could bind my friend to was this, that I should in all probability get to Querétaro and back somehow, as no Diligencia had yet quite broken down.

"They are very strongly built," said he. "Did you never see one?"

"I have seen them, and that is all," I replied.

"Do me the favour, then, to step into our yard."

So to the yard we went to see; and if cumbrousness means strength, the Diligencia I saw was strong, and the mules and horses must be strong, I thought, to draw it. An enormous set of four wheels are attached to a frame or carriage consisting of a heavy double perch, and corresponding axletrees; all being braced well together with iron throughout, and carrying a pole of proportionate dimensions. Add the apparatus of a powerful brake. On this frame are fixed four strong iron uprights, at each corner, shorter than the four uprights on our Lord Mayor's coach in London, and upon these the coach, or body,

is suspended with leather straps. These are called sopandas; but they are not common straps, nor are they commonly attached. They are broad and thick beyond example in carriage construction, and, besides being tightly stitched together, they are carried in double completely under the whole length of each side of the coach, from upright to upright. Behind, is a place for what I may call a real chignon of luggage; atop there is room for more, and plenty more goes there. On the outside in front there is barely room for three passengers, and lower down there is just room enough for the coachman and for the guard, who runs, rides, and labours by turns.

And what would the coach contain inside? This one would contain nine passengers, but some are made to contain twelve; three in the back seat, three in the front seat, and three in the middle, with a deep broad strap for them to lean against. Such was the enormous animal in whose womb I was to travel a certain number of leagues, arriving in Querétaro by regulation time, after a twenty-three hours' journey, including a stoppage for the night at a station called Destello. Even before realizing what are called roads in Mexico, the affair, in face of the mere vehicle, appeared impossible, and English coaching people would have roared with laughter! These vehicles were all built in the States.

Now I don't believe that these particulars and others that I shall recount of the journey will be in

themselves uninteresting reading; but I have a special object in setting them out. I want it to be perfectly well understood in England what travelling in Mexico, except on railways and tramways, really is. I want to show some ground for what I have already said, and now repeat: that it is too late for Mexico to talk of mere road-making; that she has no time left for that slow work; that wherever ways of communication are wanted they must be almost exclusively provided on the system now prevailing; that she must at once set to work with rail laying, whether it be for locomotives or for mules; and that the material progress of the country, its political unity, and the security of the people are impossible, while the present practical isolation of towns and states, which lie at a distance from one another, leaves no reasonable chance for that intercourse between populations, sparse as they are, which alone can create unity, which alone can create strength. Besides which, this same road to Querétaro and onwards, along which the Central Railway and a narrow-gauge diverging line are now in course of construction, lies up the very spinal marrow of the country, and will open all her system, and notably the promising cities, with their neighbourhoods, of San Luis Potosi, Aquas Calientes, and Guadalajara, by means of the English line, to Vera Cruz, which is and ever will be commercially, as it must some day be made artistically, the great port of Mexico.

So I shall go on to say that my notion of an outside seat was tabooed offhand. I could have the best in the coach; and this was No 4, being an inside corner with my back to the mules. On my suggesting the opposite one behind, the administrator said—

"Don't take a corner on the hinder seat, Señor, to face them."

"Why not? I generally prefer doing so."

"Yes, Señor; but the fact is, that sometimes passengers not accustomed to our roads and carriages suffer *marcamiento* there." What does mareamiento mean? I may be asked. It means, literally, sea-sickness. Sea-sickness in a Diligencia! Now, although I am not liable to this tyrannical visitation where it has a right to occur—on the broad waters—I might very well be so where it had no such right—in a Diligencia. Trials out of place and under false aspect are always unfair; so I paid my money and took No. 4, receiving for it a ticket with the heading of a coach and six horses, spinning along the road in first-class style, derisive of all misgivings upon their capacity to go. This journey to Querétaro, however, must not be taken as having been one entirely of Diligencia. Hard as it may seem, it was alleviated by railway; for as far as Huehuetoca the passengers could avail themselves of a narrow-gauge line of rails, being part of the line which is to run parallel with the Central Railway as far as Querétaro, and thence is to branch off more northward through

San Luis Potosi. This, also, will open intercourse with Vera Cruz; and while I am writing I receive a map, published by Mr. Abbott, F.R.G.S., which very clearly shows the two lines in question, both of which will doubtless be open to Querétaro before these pages are published. For myself, however, I had the offer of going by the Central line, which I was desirous of seeing, and which in truth took me somewhat farther on my journey than Huehuetoca, namely to Tula, the ancient great Toltec capital.

Having, therefore, obtained a special pass for this line of Mr. Fink, the general manager, through Mr. Jackson (for the line was not open), I appeared at the necessary early hour at the station, where I found three Señores standing in something like my own uncertainty; for everything was in the mere course of construction and no regular train was there.

"Do we start from here to Querétaro?" I asked.

"If not," was the facetious reply, "we are as wrong as you, for we are here with that purpose!"

But it turned out we were right; for by-and-by the "materials train" backed in, with a van and chairs. This was not velvety accommodation, but after somewhat of a to and fro shunting (what a word that is! and offspring only of a bad pronunciation of the word "shove") it was superseded by a fine American long car, into which we all changed: this change having been made, as I afterwards came to learn, in deference to one of the three with whom I had

spoken. We thus ran merrily along our line to Tuna, a distance of some fifty English miles, throughout which everything seemed to be very carefully constructed. Some of the bridges attract attention; but by far the most important feature in these works is presented by the passage of the line, for some kilomètres, through the naked gorge of Nachistongo, where it runs parallel with the great Spanish drainage canal of Huehuetoca. Here the rails are laid along the lofty, and somewhat loose looking, precipitous sides, half-way down between their crests and the stream; so that, to the common eye, a long retaining wall would appear to be necessary to support the banks below, and the most careful sloping off and facing, to prevent landslips from those above. But all will, no doubt, be well attended to.

At Tuna we breakfasted, and here we were to wait the Diligencia from Huehuetoca, just beyond which spot some kind friend told us he had seen it stuck fast as we passed along the line. But this was an unworthy libel on that nimble curricle; for scarcely had we left the table, when a loud rattle at a short distance assailed our ears; a battle-cry of "viene" arose; and round the corner came the nine-insider, positively galloping as in the heading of the ticket, if only for some twenty yards, and horsed, not with "the sightless couriers of the air," but with no less than nine visible mules.

Now I had gradually grown into very pleasant

intercourse with the three "foreigners"—Englishmen in a foreign country always consider the inhabitants to be the "foreigners"—and, in fact, we had gone through that now highly advanced system of making friends with one another on the line; we had exchanged "drinks;" so we were all Freemasons together; though, by the way, I am not professionally one. When, therefore, the Diligencia pulled up to change and I saw my No. 4 occupied, I raised a voice of protest.

"That is nothing," said the tallest; "he is a friend going with me; in fact, you can sit where you like, for I have nearly all the places."

Who was this gentleman, and where was he going?

When we started, however, I did not immediately take my seat in No. 4, thinking I would try my loved outside first. It was a parallel case with John Gilpin—

> "And up he got in haste to ride,
> But soon came down again."

My own reasons for coming down, however, were that I found I had never yet known what real shaking and jolting meant; for here not only were they enough to shake you to pieces, but to shake all the pieces off afterwards. Holes in the road and boulders in the stream were all taken as a matter of course; how the coachman kept his seat and managed his team I know not; and then, as ill luck would have it, a

sudden storm came on, and before I well knew where I was it had wet my mackintosh nearly through, shooting its long breadths of lightning one upon another, and following them up, upon the instant, with its rattling thunders; floods of rain pouring down such as Mexican storms can pour. So when the fury passed I took to No. 4 and kept it to Querétaro.

This brought me into closer contact with my friends, and we soon were jolting out a conversation. I told them I had come to pass two months in their country, and was making a point of seeing Querétaro, and its fatal scene the Cerro de las Campanas.

"Ah!" said one of them (and here let me remark that all my conversations must be taken for granted as real translations of the Spanish; for I cannot set the original text by their side, as I have done in the "Lusiads," and "Seventy Sonnets of Camoens"), "ah! how curious we should meet just here! Let me introduce you to General Fuero; he was one of the colonels at Querétaro during all the period of the trial of Maximilian, and commanded a regiment at the execution. And this is Señor Don Licenciado Escoto, who was the Government Assessor at the court-martial which sat in judgment on Maximilian and his two generals."

Truly no chance meeting could have happened more opportunely, and the importance of my new acquaintance was explained. So we all exchanged cards and went on jolting up and down, and to and

fro, and from side to side together, there being nine passengers occupying the inside. And soon it was that I comprehended the danger of suffering sea-sickness in the hindermost seats, for the three in the distant rear danced up and down, as if upon high waves in a small boat. This seemed ludicrous, especially as there was no actual illness. But something there was of the formidable also; for each man, except myself, carried his revolver and corresponding belt of cartridges; swords and daggers, and anything else you like to mention, were also at hand. But then all this was in my favour, for it was against the brigands; so that I was not entirely overcome with terror, and bethought me of a line from "Julius Cæsar:"

"To you our swords have leaden points, Mark Anthony."

Besides this, an escort of course attended us.

The one of the party who had brought about the introduction was, as I found from his card, a member of Congress, of the Chamber of Deputies, Señor Don Manoel F. Alatorre. General Fuero was now high in command in the Mexican army, and was on his way —imagine such a journey!—to Paso del Norte, at the very northernmost point of the country, to take military command of that district. At the time of Maximilian's execution he was also distinguished as a colonel. Señor Licenciado (Doctor in Laws) Escoto was the Assessor at the trial, as stated, whose name so frequently occurs, overruling every objection of the

accused. He was present all through the proceedings and at the execution. I saw him several times afterwards, and had several conversations with him in Mexico after my return, and I obtained many most interesting particulars from him, which I will by-and-by set forth.

But the present question is, how were we getting on? Did we get to Destello to sleep? Certainly not! Night overtook us on the road, even before we reached a station called Cerro Prieto, or the Black Mountain, some fifteen miles short of it; and for such of the journey thither as remained for the dark we jolted a walking pace of it by torchlight. Strange indeed were the appearances of the great discs of the tuna-growing cactus, as they rose up before the light, like groups of great white ugly ghosts staring at us, and then disappearing in the dark again, as if we were not worth looking after. And by their sides rose the organ, or upright cactus, whose naturally great heights were magnified by the obscurity into the marvellous. At last, after this romantic mode of travelling, we arrived at Cerro Prieto at about half-past nine at night, and a precious arrival it was! All dark! all abed, but no beds! Nothing but huts and stabling, for it is not a station. Still they waked up and got us some rude food with rude good nature; and as it was all in a new country, and everything was new, the trial was somewhat sweetened. Moreover, there happened to be an engineering station

there ; and the Americans engaged on the railway works contributed, like engineers, what they could to soften our hardships.

We have heard of "bed and board," and it was here in one shape, certainly ; there were only boards for beds. On these I could not persuade myself to fatigue my limbs with such repose as they could offer; so, wrapping my plaid about me, I suffered myself to be led to a *pajar*, or large straw house or barn ; and here I slept in perfect ease upon the loose yielding litter, being only now and then disturbed by the intrusive curiosity of an occasional mouse or two that came to see what on earth was lying there.

Before the dawn of day, and with that utterly desolate looking object before us, a morning waning moon, that professes to shine on one but looks as cold and unearthly as a ghost, we were called to drink some first-rate milk and coffee, both being sufficiently uncivilized to be pure and unadulterated. We found the Diligencia ready to dance off again ; and here we also found the Diputado and the Assessor had resolved to stop. They had started with the intention of accompanying their friend even to Querétaro, but had been so entirely, and indeed literally, shaken out of their resolution to do so that they could bear it no longer. So we bid one another "á Díos," and, leaving them to wait for the return conveyance, the general and I prepared our bones again for a further campaign.

Up to the axles and above in mud, or rattling over living rocks, or sometimes taking down loose-built stone walls to go into a field for a while, and taking down another loose stone wall to get out again, having thus avoided quagmires, we went on; the hard and dry parts of the road being the worst for coach and passengers, whatever they might be for the mules. We dined tolerably at the dull cold-looking city of San Juan del Rio, on leaving which city the road traverses a large old Spanish bridge spanning the river San Juan that runs out at Tampico; and after this it mounts a long trying hill. We had not been more than twenty minutes gone, and were mounting this hill, when an alarm was raised inside, not calling on any one, however, to draw his pistol, though nevertheless to look out for his head; for the weight of the luggage above was declared to be breaking in the roof, and threatening to fall in upon us all! I protested that I had noticed the flaw on starting, and that it was no worse now; but this was in vain. We stopped, and a mounted man, who happened to be by our side, was sent back to give warning at the office of the probable impending catastrophe. But with no useful result; for he returned with the reply that if so, so it must be, and we must be smothered, for there was no other Diligencia at San Juan. We therefore resumed our journey under doubts and fears; but the alarm happily proved groundless, and we escaped the old

historic torture of "Death by pressure," to which, however, we certainly should not have made ourselves legally liable by the offence of "Standing mute."

From this spot we continued, passing nothing but fertility on every side; and one scene I must mention of cattle without number, stretching far and wide over an immense open district called the "Sportsman's Plains." At night we came with irregularity to another station, not being a sleeping station, another alarm having meanwhile been raised in the dark that a stream we had to cross might prove too strong and deep after the rains for the mules and coach, and that we might have to wait at its margin till the morning. But this alarm turned out to be as vain as the crushing one, and the bedless hacienda Souz was reached, and supper of some sort found.

Finally, on the following morning, after thus passing two days and nights upon the road between two such cities as Mexico and Querétaro, counting forty-four leagues from Tula, we started for our last taste of all this novel kind of enjoyment; all being taken as a matter of course by those who are accustomed to such things, and know not what is better, nor will do so until they have been demoralized into discontent from having visited other countries, where impatience of the shortness of life has urged the more energetic races to discover means

of comparatively annihilating time and distance, and enabling them to live a score of the old lives in one of the new.

Amidst all this wilderness of fertility (so to call it), and while threatened with stoppages by bad roads and brigands, it was a real relief to see from time to time the growing banks and cuttings of the Central Railway, and the groups of workmen pushing forward that new course of communication. The sight seemed to give some real hope for the country, which must be hopeless as an advancing one while so utterly destitute as it is of means of travelling. At last, when we reached the hill above Querétaro, called the Cuesta China, a new sight broke upon us. Below lay the city, surrounded by a magnificent country, open to the view far and wide on all sides; and in the front ran the long picturesque line of the old Spanish high-arched aqueduct, bringing water from the mountains. It was a view to dwell upon; but alas! there were other realities besides; the rocky road, the jerking coach, the absolute impossibility of gazing quietly for two half minutes together. It was like sucking honey off thorns to twist one's agitated head out of window to behold it. The railway, however, will take all this away, and will only slide in ingloriously along the level below! Gradually we came down into the city, and rattled through the clean and healthy streets to the very decent hotel to which our Diligencia was driven. Here we arrived at half-past twelve in the

afternoon of Thursday, instead of at five in the evening of the day before; and at this hotel I naturally stayed, being glad to find the general would be staying there likewise. Thus from Vera Cruz, where Maximilian had landed, I at last found myself at Querétaro, where he died.

CHAPTER X.

QUERÉTARO AND MAXIMILIAN.

THERE is a certain historical halo surrounding Querétaro, belonging to a well-known tragic event which the lapse of now some fifteen years has not yet relegated to the mere dry records of the past, that might serve of itself alone to draw the traveller to the spot. And there is, again, another spot close by, which is yet more intimately and attractively connected with that same tragic event, which has given Querétaro a name for all the future of Mexico, and has put a mark on Mexico throughout the nations. I mean the hill or mount that is called the Cerro de las Campanas. Here the Archduke Maximilian and his two generals, Mejia and Miramon, were led forth and shot!

There is always a peculiar fascination attaching to the scene which has been marked by death of a more than usually ugly or impressive form, whether it be by murder on the highway, by mortal combat, by fatal accident, or by the unsparing infliction of the law's ultimate form of condemnation. Nor does the truth lack something of strangeness, that our interest

is always the keenest and most curious where individuals, and not numbers, have been the victims. Therefore it was, that although I made my journey to Querétaro with the practical object of seeing something of the country, of realizing the existing modes and means of travelling, and of taking a view of the city itself, from being well assured that it is destined very soon to occupy a leading position in the Republic, yet, influenced by the sort of feeling which I have referred to, and which had perhaps been more keenly moved by the accidental companionship on my journey, already recounted, and the actual presence of General Fuero himself in an adjoining room, I found when I waked on the first morning that my thoughts flew at once to Maximilian and the Cerro de las Campanas.

I had brought a letter of introduction to Señor Don Carlos Rubio, and fortunately he was a gentleman who was able to gratify my wishes on all subjects. For while I found him to be a leading manufacturer in the country, I also found that he had been intimately connected with the unhappy Emperor, not only having entertained him in his house when he made his imperial visit to the city in the early days of his aspiring to found a throne, but also supported him later and more sadly, while he lay for five weeks an invalided prisoner in the convent of the Capuchinas; passing through his trial, condemned, and awaiting his execution.

My first step was, of course, the delivery of my letter, with which object I walked across the handsomely planted plaza, and realized that spot so full of associations with scenes during the siege of the city, as conducted by General Escobedo. And here I will at once express to Señor Rubio how much I appreciated his courteous and valuable disposition to enable me to turn my few days in Querétaro to the best account. Our conversations were, naturally, all carried on in Spanish, as were those with others at Querétaro, and anything that I repeat in English must be thus accepted; and all must be read in its turn, as the conversations took place, without reference to the real line of events, in the strict order of their occurrence.

I naturally was to pay a visit to Señor Rubio's cotton manufactory, called the "Hercules," and arrangements were at once made for our driving out there on a given day. But the first movement was to the Cerro, whither we drove after my call. It lies about seven hundred yards outside the city, to the west, by a very bad piece of road, which with some difficulty we managed to get over, and turning into a rough open pasture ground we left the carriage and walked to the foot of the Cerro. In the course of a few paces we came to a large heap of granite blocks, on the north-east corner of the mount, which I recognized as having seen in a lithograph; and here Señor Rubio stopped me.

"Here," said he, "is the exact fatal spot; here formerly stood the three small black wooden crosses that marked where Maximilian and his two generals, Miramon and Mejia, were shot and fell."

I felt there was something very impressive at this moment in standing on this "very spot." The large confused mass of granite blocks by which it is at present marked bear very much the appearance of being the remains of a loose stone wall; and as the accounts of the execution state that the three victims were placed in front of a wall, I imagine these stones must have composed it, although some say the wall in question was composed of adobe, or unburnt brick. Such a stone wall, moreover, had very likely been put together during the siege, for aiding such fortifications as then existed on the Cerro.

All was quiet enough now, and sheep and cattle were feeding in the sunshine on the mount. The view of Querétaro was charming, and on my remarking this—

"Yes," said Señor Rubio; "and I understand that that was the remark of Maximilian when he left his carriage and was going to take his position."

"You were not present at the execution?"

"No; I bade him farewell the day before; and so little did I know the hour that was fixed for it, that I became aware of the fact only by my servant running into my room early on the morning of the 19th of June, and saying that bodies of troops were moving

towards the Cerro, and that he thought something very serious was going to take place. I immediately dressed and hastened up to my azotéa (flat roof) with my opera-glass, and was just in time to hear the discharge and to see in the distance all that was going on. Then I knew that the Emperor was dead; and presently the bells of all our churches rang out, by order, to proclaim the fact; and the troops returned, with their bands playing."

"Is not the Padre living here," I asked, "who attended the Emperor at his last moments?"

"He is," said Señor Rubio; "he is now a canon—Canon Soria: he was Maximilian's confessor, and attended him to his execution; and if you feel so inclined, I could try and make an appointment for us to go together and call on him."

This was an offer which I, of course, immediately accepted, and after walking to and fro together for some ten minutes more, I considered my first visit to the Cerro made, and we returned to our carriage and to the city.

The Cerro is an abrupt rocky mount, but of insignificant height, rising suddenly out of a somewhat flat ground immediately round about it. Its name signifies the mount of bells (Campanas, not Campañas); and as I could get no reason given me for this name I have settled for myself that it must have reference to the strolling goats, and sheep, and cattle, that browse about the sides, and are for the most part belled, so

that they may be quickly traced. I did not go to the top on this visit, but returned alone to take a longer survey on the afternoon before I left Querétaro.

The next object I was desirous of seeing was the room in which Maximilian was confined. This was at the convent of the Capuchinas, in the midst of the city, whither he was in a few days removed with his two generals, Miramon and Mejia, having been at first taken back to his room at the College of the Santa Cruz, which he had made his quarters, and where he was betrayed at night, as will be treated of. It was from the Capuchinas that they all three were taken to be shot. Accordingly we drove there.

The convent is a stone building, and we mounted a stone staircase into an open stone corridor, or gallery, looking out into a small court below, in which was a garden, planted with a tree and flowers. The Emperor's room was in the corner of this corridor, the door opening into it; that of Miramon was next to him, and Mejia's was a door or two off. The room that was called his cell was perfectly plain, showing four whitewashed walls. It must be called small, particularly considering that it was his only one. Otherwise, it was not really a mere prison cell, but such an apartment as one would very frequently find, even in private houses or hotels, for a bedroom in these Spanish countries. Indeed, it evidently had been used as a private room or a bedroom in the convent. I took the measurement; it was just

twenty-one of my own feet square, and decidedly lofty. There was no window, and the light was admitted through a glass casement over the door. There is, again, nothing unusual in this arrangement in these countries; one of the best hotels at Montevideo is so constructed. The doors were always open and the prisoners could walk in the corridor and see the sky above. For the first two or three days, however, the Emperor appears to have been somewhat roughly treated; and it has been asserted that the first intention was to shoot them all at once, without a court-martial.

Maximilian was supplied with food by Señor Rubio, and had all he wanted in that respect; but he was for the most part of the time a great sufferer from dysentery, and could take little more than fruit and wine. Indeed, he did not attend the court-martial personally, his presence being excused on account of ill-health. It is true, however, as Señor Rubio told me, that he once had to complain of his guard robbing him of what was sent. On this occasion Escobedo, who was naturally very cold and distant, treating Maximilian as a prisoner, returned only an abrupt answer to Señor Rubio's complaint. But when all the tragedy was over, and Juarez passed through Querétaro on his way to Mexico, Señor Rubio mentioned this fact to him, and on Juarez asking what Escobedo had to say, the general replied he did not recollect the circumstance, though

it very likely had taken place. Maximilian would seem to have been gradually growing tired of life; mind and body had been overwrought, not merely by events at Querétaro, but by his whole unhappy Mexican career. The chronic dysentery under which he was labouring gave Dr. Basch, his private physician and a co-prisoner, continual anxiety, and kept him always at his side. Prince Salm-Salm, who came to be Maximilian's first aide-de-camp, and appears from the work he has written to have enjoyed his intimate confidence, was also a prisoner among others.

Miramon and Mejia were treated in much the same manner as the Emperor, guard being kept over all the prisoners. I could not discover that there had been any uncalled-for strictness in this respect. Prisoners are prisoners; and moreover, it is quite confessed, and is notorious, that escape was intended and hopelessly schemed for, in which plan the Princess Salm-Salm bore a leading part, with more of the zeal of a woman than of practical discernment. The thing was impossible. She was the moving spirit in the hopeless efforts, of which Escobedo was perfectly aware, and he crippled her means of intercourse with her husband in consequence. Escobedo, indeed, summoned Dr. Basch one day (as he writes in his volume), telling him, with a sardonic smile, that he knew all, and adding, "You will be among the first I will hang." Something of the same sort

was also said to Prince Salm-Salm by a General Paz, who said, "You have attempted to effect the escape of Maximilian. If you repeat it you will be shot." Under these circumstances, it cannot be wondered at that the cries, "Sentinella alerta," were sometimes loud and tiresome, or that intercourse between the prisoners was at times restricted. The Princess Salm-Salm was at last sent away altogether.

The story of the betrayal of Querétaro may be told shortly. The siege of the untenable city—which the Emperor himself had called a "mouse-trap," and yet was persuaded to come there instead of quitting the country—had lasted seventy-one days up to the morning of the 15th of May, 1867. Great sufferings had been gone through, and much fighting had taken place; there had been constant wranglings among the generals and colonels, of which Maximilian had bitterly complained, but had always supported the wrong men—Lopez and Marquez against Miramon and Mejia.

Marquez had been sent to Mexico on the most trusty mission of finding men and means, and had not yet returned or been heard of. This fact caused much mistrust—and genuine, as the result showed; and it had been decided at last to make a desperate sally on the night of the 15th or morning of the 16th of May, to cut through the besieging forces and retire upon Mexico, and all had been studiously schemed. Whether this daring attempt could have been carried

out successfully may be much doubted, and was never proved.

For behold! a suddenly intervening catastrophe. Early on the morning of the 15th, and while it was yet dark, Colonel Lopez, whom Maximilian, as usual, had intimately consulted as to the movement, and to whom he had intrusted the safety of his person and of the Cruz where he was quartered, and whom he had specially decorated with the "Medal for valour" immediately after the last council, suddenly rushed into Prince Salm-Salm's room, and saying in a very excited manner, "Quick! save the life of the Emperor, the enemy is already in the Cruz," immediately disappeared. The Emperor had been roused and seemed to take the matter very coolly. He was very unwell, having become chronically so: and he said calmly (perhaps indifferently), "Salm, we are betrayed; we will go to the Cerro and see how we can arrange the matter." And to the Cerro they went. While on their way thither, a most remarkable incident occurred. They came suddenly upon Lopez by the side of Colonel Rincon Gallardo, one of the Republican officers, who, of course, instantly recognized the Emperor. Instead, however, of taking him prisoner, he turned to his soldiers and uttered these remarkable words: "Que passen, son paisanos" —"Let them pass; they are civilians." He would seem to have been ashamed to avail himself too harshly of treachery at the moment, and perhaps was

not unwilling that Maximilian should have a chance of escape. The Emperor himself was astonished at the act, and attributed it to some former kindness on his part. Lopez, "whom, strange to say" (writes Prince Salm) "none of us yet suspected," said nothing; but a moment afterwards appeared on horseback and entreated the Emperor to come to Señor Rubio's house. But the Emperor replied, "I do not hide myself." Almost immediately afterwards, and almost by magic, the Emperor's piebald horse appeared, supposed by the Prince to have been sent by Lopez. He no doubt felt something of that remorse, even in the darkness of treachery, which is represented as having stung Judas Iscariot. He shrank from the stain of the blood of his benefactor and chief. But nothing could persuade Maximilian to mount. "If you gentlemen" (he said) "walk, I will walk." And to the Cerro they walked. Mejia followed shortly, but Miramon, having been wounded in the face, was captured in the city.

A dead silence seems to have pervaded Querétaro at the moment when the besiegers were introduced by Lopez; but by-and-by, when the dawn had fully opened into a beautiful daylight, the bells of the Cruz broke forth into loud ringing, followed immediately by those of the San Francisco convent. Maximilian and his officers were already on the Cerro to hear these hostile sounds, proclaiming that treason had triumphed. The city supposed at first that the bells

were to celebrate the return of the tardy Marquez; for the position of the San Francisco was central. But when the truth, following the morning, dawned and shone, these sounds were known to signify the despair and not the hope, of the defence; they announced to the inhabitants that the city had been betrayed and taken.

At the Cerro the position of Maximilian was at once perceived to be desperate, but some considerable firing still went on. Here it is that Prince Salm puts this remarkable phrase into the Emperor's mouth: "Salm, now for a lucky bullet." So far back, also, as the 9th of May, Salm writes thus: "The Emperor was in a very sad mood to-day; shells and balls struck near us in disagreeable quantities, but none of them would satisfy the secret longing of the Emperor." I have always felt persuaded that this was the secret longing of the Emperor Napoleon III. at Sedan. But Maximilian, like him, survived to be made prisoner. General Eschegaray claimed him at the Cerro, with respectful courtesy. General Escobedo afterwards arrived; and there the Emperor surrendered his sword, where by-and-by he was to surrender his life.

Committed to the keeping of General Vicente Riva-Palacio; acting under Escobedo's orders, he was conducted back (as already stated) to his quarters at the Cruz convent. A long conversation appears to have taken place between them, at the close of which

Maximilian asked the general whether he should be shot. Riva-Palacio told him frankly that such would surely be the case; whereon Maximilian replied, "I am resigned," and embracing the general with emotion, on his dismounting, presented him with his horse as it stood, saying, "He is the first and the last that I have ridden in Mexico."

A noble trait in the character of General Mejia should be here recorded, in connection with which General Escobedo is not without his title to respect. Some years before, in 1857, Escobedo had lost a battle at Rio-verde, and Marquez, *more suo*, was desirous of shooting him; but Mejia interposed and saved his life, for Escobedo was a friend of Mejia, and Mejia, indeed, in his last hours, consigned his child to the guardianship of Escobedo. When, therefore, Mejia was taken prisoner at Querétaro, Escobedo volunteered to save his life, which his influence with the Government and the army would have enabled him to do. To this tempting offer the noble Indian replied, "I accept, if the emperor and Miramon can be saved also." But Escobedo told him that nothing could save Maximilian. "Then," said Mejia, "they shall shoot me with his Majesty." And this we know they did.

On the next day I called on Señor Rubio and had a long conversation with him. He had been good enough to see Canon Soria, who had marked the Saturday evening for our interview, and in the morning we were to visit the cotton manufactory. My

conversation naturally ran on Maximilian again. Señor Rubio told me he had a curious distant manner about him, while in power: he would always go about with his hands behind him. "One fact I found very singular," he continued; "when he passed through here, on his journey through the country to Guanahuato, he was my guest for some fifteen days, but he never shook hands with me; not even on quitting my house. He was at liberty also to ask those to dinner whom he pleased to honour so far; and on several occasions we had parties of eight, with ladies; but he never put forward a hand to any one. He would come in at that door behind you just five minutes before the dinner hour, and would bow all round, and then stand for the remaining minute or so with his back to this fireplace; then when that door was opened he would look round and say with perfect courtesy, 'Vamos comer?'—'Shall we go to dinner?' He would then walk in first, alone. At the table he was gracious in conversation. Once only, I remember his desiring an Austrian officer, abruptly, to cease talking against Mexican horses, which he was praising." In adversity he appears to have been more condescending and accessible, as many of us are, and one of the officers engaged in guarding him told me he was a dangerous man to have to look after as an enemy: signifying, of course, that his manners conciliated a dangerous sympathy.

"I suppose," I observed, "there can be no doubt

that Colonel Lopez really did betray Querétaro to General Escobedo for a bribe?"

"Everybody knows he did," said Señor Rubio; "and when Juarez was here he himself regretted to me that the city had not been taken by storm; that showed he knew how it really was taken."

For my own part, after reading and talking all round concerning this wretched affair, I cannot for a moment doubt that such was the fact. What seems perfectly clear is, that on the morning of the 15th of May, 1867, Lopez betrayed the gate at the Santa Cruz where the Emperor was quartered, for some eight or ten thousand pesos (say two thousand pounds). What is not by any means at all so clear is, that he got the money he was promised for so doing.

Señor Rubio was very warm upon this subject, as we went on talking. "I will tell you," he said, "a very curious circumstance that happened to me on that occasion, and in this very room where we are now sitting. I was waked about four in the morning, to my great astonishment, by my servant calling me to see some strangers, and on coming in here as quickly as I could, I found my friend Colonel José Rincon Gallardo" (the same that let the Emperor pass), "with another officer and some one else whom I did not know. 'What is this?' I exclaimed. 'Are you a prisoner? how came you from the besieging army into the city?' 'The city is taken,' he replied. 'I am dying of exhaustion; give me some coffee and cognac,

my friend.' This was hastily prepared, and of course with three cups and glasses; but when I offered one to the stranger, Rincon called out, 'No, I do not drink with a traitor; if he drinks I do not!' I was utterly astonished, and afterwards heard the whole story, and that the stranger was Colonel Lopez. Lopez was never arrested, even for five minutes."

"But what did Lopez say to so frightful a challenge?" I asked.

"Nada, quedó silencioso"—"Nothing, he was silent."

"Is it possible?"

"I give you my authority to repeat what I say. I will give you a subsequent instance of a similar scene. Lopez was in my fabrica, Purissima, with one or two others, when General Martinez came in and shook hands with them all. Presently he said to me, 'Who is that stranger I shook hands with among our friends?' 'That,' said I, 'is Colonel Lopez.' 'What!' he exclaimed; and going up to him at once with vehemence, he cried out before us all, 'Colonel Lopez! I gave you my hand without knowing who you were, and I will now wash it, for it is stained.' Lopez shrank away from us."

"Where is the man now?" I asked.

"Who knows? he is out of sight somewhere, unknown and unsought."

Prince Salm-Salm tells a like anecdote, and represents this same Colonel José Rincon Gallardo speak-

ing about Lopez to the Emperor himself, when he was brought back to the Cruz, and saying, "people like him are made use of and then kicked out."

The Spaniards have a proverb that is in point: "Oigo el chisme, despreso al chismoso"—"I hear the slander, I despise the slanderer."

So Bolingbroke to Exton in Richard II., when he had murdered the King, though at his own bidding:

> "They love not poison that do poison need,
> Nor do I thee; though I did wish him dead,
> I hate the murderer, love him murdered.
> The guilt of conscience take thou for thy labour,
> But neither my good word, nor princely favour:
> With Cain go wander through the shades of night,
> And never show thy head by day nor light."

Thus ended our conversation for the present; and as my own engagements for the next morning took me to the "Hercules" cotton manufactory of Señor Rubio, our appointment with the Canon Soria not being till the evening, I shall take my readers to the factory with me before telling them what I learned from the Canon. What his Reverence had to say will come quite as naturally to them as it did to me; besides which, when I return to the subject of Maximilian I mean to finish all I have to say about it, including all the interesting details which I learned in my conversations with Señor Joaquin Escoto, although I did not obtain these until after my return to Mexico. Therefore I will first clear off the cotton question, which happily, so far as I had to deal with it, did not

include any inquiry into the late "cornering" of cotton on the Liverpool Exchange.

Nor need I occupy many pages in saying what I have to say on this subject, although the spirit of my observations may be far more important than their body. For I wish at once to commit myself to the belief that Mexico, so soon as she obtains a good chance of breathing, will bloom forth into a most important country in this respect. And I may, perhaps, claim some title to speak of cotton; for as I walked through the large rooms where all the looms were working, and saw the brown-faced busy Indians all at work, my recollections ran pleasantly back to the province of São Paulo, where I had the felicity, by means of writing pamphlets and talking and distributing certain portions of herbaceous cotton, to entirely introduce the cultivation of that special and particular plant into that highly gifted province. I acted on the opportunity afforded by the civil war in the "States," and the Brazilian fazendeiros responded admirably. Santos cotton has been a long time in high repute at Manchester, and though circumstances have changed and it may not now appear so abundantly, yet the province in the first years made very large sums of money by their response—stated to me to approach £2,000,000 altogether—and the railway gained large freights. Moreover, the province still grows cotton, and has become permanently a manufacturing province, for

its own uses, of coffee bags and other articles. In virtue of this success of their industry the Paulistas christened me by the new baptismal name of "Pãe do Algodão, or the "Father of Cotton," a name I was by no means ashamed to bear. Nor do I forget for a moment that I possess also the gold medal of the Cotton Association of Manchester, handsomely bestowed upon me in consequence; and that I owe a mark of distinction, for this same reason, to the generosity of H.I.M. Dom Pedro II., who has been graciously pleased to bestow on me the Commenda of the Rose. On these grounds, therefore, though I dislike the appellation of prophet altogether, I may claim in some sort to be a cotton prophet, as regards what I am ready to commit myself to in speaking of Mexico as a cotton-growing country. In that character, then, thus assumed, I prophesy; and I cry with a loud voice for cotton growth and cotton manufactories in Mexico.

I have already alluded to two or three factories, especially to one about to open in the flat valley of Orizaba, erected by Mr. Braneth, who is himself an American, and not a very dull one either. But this fabrica of the Señores Rubio is the only one I have visited. The whole establishment, buildings, machinery, workpeople, and grounds present a perfect picture. It was really walking into another world to find so much activity, intelligence, and productiveness altogether, after leaving the desolate quagmires of

roads, with their cumbrous travelling coach, all associated with an unknown and useless country. Here, in the "Hercules," I saw what very much more reminded me of the banks and cuttings of the Central Railway and the crowds of workmen that had regaled my eyes, to an extent that in some shape alleviated the toil and agony of my bones. And this line especially comes again to my mind in connection with the mill; for in passing onwards through Querétaro, it runs within two hundred yards of the property.

Hitherto this factory has ranked as the largest cotton factory in Mexico, but it cannot long remain even in its present satisfactory activity, for it must follow in the wake of that general development which closely attends on the destinies of Querétaro. The manufacture it sends forth is called, I believe, grey shirtings, and it furnishes the material universally worn among the working classes in Mexico. Although the produce is large, the demand, even now, considerably exceeds it. The short staple cotton in use comes from the State of Vera Cruz; the long staple from the Pacific coast; and rather more than half the raw quality employed is imported from the States. Here, at once, are presented two special considerations: the opening of railway communication to New York will bring down cotton cheaper, while the opening of it to Vera Cruz will increase the production there. But there are many other cotton-producing

districts in Mexico, and, I repeat, the use of the goods that are manufactured is universal.

The workpeople at the "Hercules" are Indians; steady, attentive and obedient. At the hour we were visiting the factory they all came tumbling down the staircases—men and women, boys and girls—to the call for breakfast, which they get at half-past nine and for which they have half an hour. Their next meal is at two o'clock, for which they have an hour. But the length of the working hours surprised me. They begin at five o'clock in the morning—the days in these latitudes not varying as in ours—and continue, with the intermissions mentioned, till half-past nine at night. The climate is no doubt more or less fine all the year round; but the hours nevertheless seem excessive. Nor could I help recalling our own well-remembered fights in the House of Commons about the "Ten Hours Bill;" nor do I forget how, on one occasion, Sir Robert Peel made the House of Commons who had adopted the "ten hours" change their vote, upon a subsequent division, by a threat of resignation upon this question. That is now a good many years ago, but it caused a great sensation at the time. The number of workpeople at the "Hercules" is put down at twelve hundred. Steam and water are both employed for moving the machinery, and the gas is produced from resin and inferior oil! For the water, which is abundant, a course has been opened by means of a large tunnel of some hundreds of mètres cut through the mountain.

There are also two similar though smaller factories, belonging to the Señores Rubio, close by; called the "Purissima" (where the scene I have recounted took place) and the "San Antonio." And again, there is one for grinding corn. The others, I believe, also contain certain apparatus for this purpose; if so it is a good thought; for cotton, as I again prophesy, will "bring grist to the mill."

In my stroll through the city, on my return from the fabrica, my eye caught the word "Hidalgo," as the name of the street I was walking into. A sudden comparison between two deaths occurred to me. Hidalgo, and the Cerro de las Campanas! What a contrast! Here, in our own days, died one against whom none could charge natural cruelty of disposition, intruder though he might be; one who was betrayed, captured, tried, condemned, and put to death by the Mexican Republic for his attempts to establish himself a Mexican Emperor. There stood the name of another, who, in 1811, literally had Spaniards hacked in pieces, who was also captured, tried, condemned, and put to death, but by the Spanish Monarchy, for his attempts to establish a Mexican Republic. Still, not all Republicans are bloodthirsty, nor are all Emperors benignant; and the late prolonged fight to establish an empire in Mexico did not succumb without red hands on both sides.

The night appointed for our meeting with the Canon Soria turned out to be extremely wet, and

I almost began to fear that Señor Rubio might feel unable to introduce me to an interview which I must confess I was very anxious to secure. For here was not only the very man I wished to talk with, but the very man upon the very spot of history; and how different this to simply reading only of events, or even speaking with an actor off the scene! How different to me, for example, compared with what I write will be to my readers! However, I have something to say that should be worth reading, for as it turned out, and as I ought to have anticipated, people in Mexico have long since ceased to be afraid of rain if they ever were so, and, moreover, Señor Carlos Rubio is not a man to disappoint a friend if he can possibly help it.

I found Señor Rubio's carriage standing in his courtyard, which I reached through the rain, and I found him ready to start. A few minutes' drive brought us to the Canon's house, and we were ushered upstairs into the drawing-room, where the Canon very shortly appeared to greet us. He struck me, in his appearance, as belonging to a type of priesthood familiar to me: quiet, with a scholastic savour, and courteous. He somewhat reminded me of old Archbishop Howley, though he had not such a bright pair of eyes as that venerable prelate; but he was more easy in conversation, at all events, than our revered ecclesiastic used to be in oratory. His age was ripe; he was thin and apparently delicate, and, even at the present day,

showed signs of having keenly felt for the foredoomed man whom it had been his priestly office to console and shrive. This sensibility, indeed, was more than once referred to by Maximilian himself. "Yo soy quien tengo que consolar á ese pobre sacercote," records his physician, Dr. Basch, "para que no se abata completamente"—"I it is, who have to support that good priest, that he may not be completely overcome." The circumstances under which these words were spoken forbid us to understand them in a too literal sense; there may be rather discovered in them a delicate expression of gratitude towards one who showed so deep a sympathy where none who could have saved would sympathize, and thus recommended the offices of his Church with even something more of consolation than Maximilian, as a believing member, would, in the ordinary course, have derived from them.

"I was with him," said the Canon, "to the latest hour of his last night, and I was there the next morning, to attend him to the place of execution. Before he went to sleep I wrote for him, at his dictation, a reverential letter to his Holiness the Pope, which he signed, and he was then desirous to write his last letter to his mother; but, after making several efforts, he dropped the pen; his spirit recoiled, and he finally relinquished the attempt."

"Did he make any particular observation on your way to the Cerro?"

"He was chiefly occupied in recommending his

soul to heaven; but he did make one which I well remember: he said, 'It was here I intended to raise the flag of victory, and it is here I am come to die! This life is a comedy!'"

"And he died with a crucifix in his hand?"

"No: he carried one with him in the carriage with me; it was one belonging to my family, which I lent him, and I have it in my possession here: he gave it back to me when we embraced for the last time."

"I have heard he remarked on the beautiful morning and the fine view of the city from the Cerro."

"That is quite true; he said he always wished to die on a fine day, and was well content to do so on that morning. He remarked upon the view of the city, and said, 'What a beautiful view, and what a beautiful day to die on!'"

"He was quite collected?"

"His coolness surprised me. They had furnished us only with common coaches, and when we arrived at the scene, the door would not open: he would not wait, but taking off his hat he pushed himself through the window: I got out as well as I could on the other side. I saw him give Miramon the place of honour in the centre; I saw him give some pieces of gold to the soldiers and heard his few words; I saw him lay both his hands on his breast, and look forward; and then I heard the discharge of the soldiers' pieces, and I saw the three fall." The Canon is said to have been painfully overcome.

"Maximilian did not die on the spot?"

"No! the *coup de grace* was given. I believe he was bodily and mentally weary of life, and Mejia had told him that the Empress was dead." On this particular circumstance I shall have more to say by-and-by. Señor Soria was under the impression that the *coup de grace* was given to all three; but General Fuero and Señor D. Joaquin Escoto, who gave me yet more details, both say no.

The Canon then recounted a very singular circumstance, and I am sure his memory must have been correct from the graphic manner in which he rose from his seat and imitated the gesture of Maximilian. He told me that, to his own sudden surprise, just as they were leaving the Capuchinas convent for the Cerro, Maximilian pulled himself together, and striking his hand over his breast, said—

"I have doubled eight handkerchiefs over here to prevent my blood from soiling my uniform."

The Emperor must have meant what he said, though Señor Escoto, who was present when the body was uncovered for embalming, does not remember seeing handkerchiefs. This mere circumstance, however, cannot shake the Canon's graphic record; nor can I forbear remarking that the story serves to illustrate that certain small vanity which was so evident a weakness in Maximilian. I shall presently recount as told me by Señor Escoto, another curious circumstance, also illustrating this feeling.

I asked Canon Soria whether there was much feeling exhibited in Querétaro upon the subject of the execution. He said, "A great deal. The whole of the population went into mourning for some days, and abstained from entertainments. Numbers went to witness the Emperor's death, and it is said that General Escobedo ordered out four thousand troops on the occasion to prevent any chance of a disturbance."

The Canon had always been the Emperor's spiritual adviser during his imprisonment, and, like all others who had been in friendly contact with him in his adversity, had to a considerable extent been fascinated by his bearing. In the course of our conversation I further asked his Reverence whether he thought Maximilian had ever nourished any more than a passing hope that his life might be spared. He thought not. He said that of course, from time to time, certain expressions of hope would escape him, but that he seemed always to have a persistent persuasion of the hostile resolution of the then Prime Minister, Don Sebastian Lerdo de Tejada, that he should die. This man certainly has the credit to-day in Mexico of having been of an immovable and implacable disposition in all things. Maximilian used often to say, the Canon told me, "Juarez me perdonaría, pero Lerdo no me perdona"—"Juarez would pardon me: but Lerdo would not." On mentioning this fact to a well-known Mexican, he replied, "That much I cannot say, but this I know: that Juarez could forget, but

Lerdo never could: never! Were the time whatever it might be that elapsed between the offence and his chance of retaliation, he never forgot to avail himself of the occasion." That this man exercised great influence in all these unhappy proceedings cannot be doubted, nor is it less true that he was a very able man; able in all respects save one: he never would be wrong; and of this stupidity and conceit he has deservedly reaped the natural reward. He is now a voluntary exile in the United States, thrust out, and apparently for ever, from power in his own country.

I asked General Fuero at dinner one day, what his opinion was upon these two points. As regards Maximilian's hope of his life being spared, he could not doubt, he said, that he did nourish that hope, because he had often said to him that he did not believe the Government would allow him to be shot.

"Did you undeceive him?" I asked.

"God forbid!" said the general: "I would not tell a man he was sure to be shot!"

Now, how different this disposition from that of Riva-Palacio, who stated frankly, "You are sure to die." Which of the two was right?

As regards the distinction drawn between Juarez and Lerdo, the general saw nothing in it. He thought that both were resolved on death; and he thought also that it was a necessary resolution. He regretted Miramon much, and it pained him to see him fall, for

they had been fellow-students in the Military College and friends in life.

For my own part, I do not believe that the Government even dared to spare Maximilian's life; and I greatly doubt whether, in his ultimate humiliating position between hawk and buzzard, Maximilian could really very much care to keep it. What does the Princess Salm-Salm herself tell us was the answer of Juarez, when, with all a woman's blind impetuosity, she flung herself at his feet and begged that her own life might be taken rather than Maximilian's? "The President tried to raise me, but I held his knees convulsively, and said I would not leave him before he granted me his life. I saw the President was moved; he, as well as Mr. Inglesia, had tears in their eyes, but he assured me in a low sad voice: 'I am grieved Madame, to see you thus on your knees before me; but if all the kings and queens of Europe were in your place, I could not spare that life. It is not I who take it; it is the people and the law; and if I should not do its will, the people would take it and mine also.'"

I do not know that anything more of importance passed in the course of this, my most interesting interview with the Canon Soria, which thus came to an end; and as we rose and bid him adieu, and I expressed to him my acknowledgments, I plainly saw that many dormant recollections had been awakened, and perhaps not unpleasantly, in his mind,

in connection with these gloomy events of fifteen years ago.

I will now, according to promise, continue this subject by anticipating my return to Mexico and relating all that passed between Señor Escoto, the Assessor, and myself upon the whole subject, including a certain other episode in the tragedy, to which I have not yet referred, which he minutely related to me, and adding his whole description of the scene at the Cerro, where he was a near and intense observer. I shall afterwards remark upon the curious circumstance to which I have alluded. As I found all these details highly interesting myself, and also found all Mexicans ready to talk about them when broached, I shall conclude that they may not be without attraction in these pages.

Let me premise the episode I have referred to by saying, that the execution under the sentence of the court-martial had been originally appointed for the 16th of June, of which the prisoners had been informed; and this, at the urgent request of Maximilian's advocates, who seemed to think that every day gained gave a chance of a reprieve. Juarez, who was in San Luis Potosi, had deferred it till the 19th.

The episode, then, is as follows:—"The efforts," said Señor Escoto (for I shall put all as spoken by him, having notes in Spanish of his observations)—"the efforts to give Maximilian a chance of life, by obtaining a delay of execution, caused him, I think, more

of pain than they could raise of hope; and the granting of the three days' respite from the 16th to the 19th of June, on the urgent application of his advocates, who had gone to San Luis to see Juarez, brought about a scéne which will never be effaced from my memory. On the 15th of that month General Escobedo had accepted my confirmation of the sentence of death—as Assessor. He had retired to a small village called El Pueblito, about a league (not three miles) distant from Querétaro, in order to avoid the pain of being uselessly besought for the life of the Emperor, over which he had no control, by so many people in Querétaro. He had appointed three o'clock on the afternoon of the 16th for the execution at the Cerro, and I was myself preparing to attend it, the condemned having been duly notified to prepare for the hour, when an *employé* from the telegraph office came to inform me that a telegram was arriving from the Government of Juarez in San Luis Potosi, addressed to General Escobedo in cipher, and bearing the heading 'Very urgent.' I told him I had the key, and that I would come and decipher the telegram. Going off in great anxiety of mind to do so, I deciphered it and found that it was a postponement of the execution until the 19th. What to do? There was no time to communicate with General Escobedo before three o'clock—the appointed fatal hour—and General Dias de Léon was already at the Cerro, with all the troops

drawn out. 'This,' I said, 'is merely cruelty! Were it a pardon I could understand it. But a suspension only! Were I the responsible person I could almost persuade myself to suppress the telegram, as being too late, and let the execution take place.' But Colonel Doria, to whom these observations were made, naturally shrank from such a suggestion, and we both went together to Colonel Palacios, who had charge of the prisoners, to instruct him to postpone their being taken to the Cerro until General Escobedo should send further orders. Colonel Palacios and I then went together to inform the three prisoners of this postponement. We found them ready and actually on the move to go when we mounted the staircase to their corridor, and never shall I forget the pang it cost me to see the instinctive ray that suddenly flashed over all three countenances, as from an instant's hope that the paper Colonel Palacios was shaking in his hand contained a remission of the sentence. When the contents were read Maximilian expressed his dissatisfaction; it was a fine day, and he had prepared himself to die, and by that time would have already said good-bye to the world entirely. Miramon, turning to Maximilian, said, 'Let us dedicate this as a fresh sacrifice to the Divine Will.' The Indian, Mejia, neither said nor looked a word. While these events were happening, our orderly was on his way to Pueblito, where Escobedo, with his attendants (as he afterwards told us), were gazing

towards the Cerro with their opera-glasses, and wondering what was happening. They saw the Cerro; they saw the troops arrive and form; they waited and they saw nothing more: no prisoners came; and they understood nothing until the telegram arrived, the only answer to which was—that necessary orders were returned for the proceedings of the 19th."

The unintentional cruelty of this reprieve of a few days, granted (be it remembered) on the urgent request of the Emperor's advocates, awakened a new sympathy on behalf of the prisoners, and new and numerous efforts were made to save their lives; it being represented as equal to a double death to send them forth now to execution. But all was in vain. The execution had been irrevocably resolved on. And here, perhaps, will be the proper place for dwelling upon that strange piece of intelligence of the death of the Empress which was brought to Maximilian by Mejia, and to which Canon Soria made allusion. And I have special reason for being particular on this point, as will be shown. Whence it came, if it came at all, is unknown; it is generally supposed to have been invented by Mejia to pacify the mind of the Emperor, who had been more afflicted by the idea of leaving her in misery, than by any other consideration.

The particulars of this intelligence having been conveyed to the Emperor appear at length in Dr. Basch's book. He states that he had, on the 15th of June, just finished writing a letter, by dictation of

Maximilian, for his signature, addressed to Baron Lago, the Austrian Minister, when General Mejia entered with the news that the Empress was dead. This announcement, he says, was a terrible blow to the poor Emperor, although at the same time it made his leaving life less painful. He had, remarks the doctor, exposed himself with manly serenity to the enemies' balls; during his long imprisonment he had shown an heroic resignation and collectedness before the aspect of death; only one thought embittered his hours: it was that of the fate of his unhappy wife, whom he had to abandon to so hard a destiny. Now, this anguish ceased; and free of such a thought, he could dispose himself with greater serenity of mind to bid adieu to life. There then follows a very noteworthy passage which I translate word for word. "Immediately on receiving the news which the general had given him, he dictated to me a postscript to the letter to Baron Lago, conceived in these terms: 'At this moment I learn that my poor wife has at last ceased to suffer; this news, although it has profoundly afflicted me, serves, on the other hand, as of infinite consolation in these moments.' 'One link less with life,' he said, addressing me."

In a subsequent passage, dated the 16th, or the day following, the doctor recounts another circumstance relating to this branch of the subject: "A quarter before three" (three was the hour for the first appointed execution on the 16th of June) "the Emperor took

leave of me and of his servants, who covered his hands with tears and kisses. He gave me his wedding ring and said, 'You will return to Vienna and will see my father, my mother, and my relations; give them particulars of the siege and of the last days of my life. Tell my mother—and this I enjoin most particularly—that I have fulfilled my duty as a soldier, and that I die a true Christian.'"

The execution (as I have already said) was postponed till the 19th of June. Meanwhile, Dr. Basch had returned the ring to the Emperor; because, under date of that really fatal morning, he writes thus: "He again gave me his wedding ring, which I had returned to him on the 16th. He repeated to me his injunction and his adieux; and taking from the pocket of his waistcoat a scapulary" (two small pieces of cloth tied together by two ribbons) "which his confessor had given him, he said, 'This you will give to my mother.' This was his last injunction."

The doctor further publishes a letter addressed by Maximilian on the 16th of June to Señor Carlos Rubio, which contains this (translated) phrase: "I desire that my body may be buried in Europe by the side of that of the Empress."

This inaccurate piece of intelligence of the death of the Empress had also spread; for, according to Prince Salm-Salm, General Escobedo sent an aide-camp to know whether the Emperor was already aware of the "distressing news."

The fact is in itself interesting to know that the Emperor died in the full conviction that the Empress was dead. But my special reason for not merely contenting myself with the bare statement of it is, that while my pages were passing through the press, my attention was called by a friend to a notice of Maximilian which occurs in chapter lxxvii. of the fourth volume of the "Life of H.R.H. the Prince Consort," by Sir Theodore Martin, K.C.B. Note 4 to that chapter runs thus: I print the whole of it, though I am referring to only that portion of it which relates to the supposed message to the Empress, and which I take the liberty of printing in italics:

"The Archduke Maximilian accepted the Imperial Crown of Mexico, which was offered to him in pursuance of a decision of the Assembly of Notables, dated 10th July, 1863, and by a majority of the Mexican people. He was shot at Querétaro on the 19th of June, 1867, by order of Juarez, the President of the revolutionary republic of Mexico. *Just before he was shot, the Emperor took out his watch, and pressing a spring which concealed a portrait of the Empress, he kissed it, and gave it to the Abbé who attended him, saying, 'Carry this souvenir to Europe to my dear wife; and if she be ever able to understand you, say that my eyes closed with the impression of her image, which I shall carry with me above.' He had too much reason to think the message might never be understood;* for even before this terrible blow fell on her, the

mind of the Empress Charlotte, highly sensitive and enthusiastic as it was, had been shaken by the failure of all the bright anticipations with which the Emperor and herself had gone to Mexico. She had come to Paris some months before the Emperor Maximilian's murder, to plead with the French Government for help, which was refused. Thence she had gone to Rome; and in an interview with the Pope on the 9th of October, 1866, her insanity became apparent. She partially recovered; but after several relapses, her reason became clouded in 1869, apparently beyond hope of recovery."

The particulars I have stated, however, show that the information given to Sir Theodore Martin was inaccurate. I will further add to what I have already written, that it is to be noted that Maximilian makes no mention of the Empress, even on giving Dr. Basch his wedding ring; and, further, that as Canon Soria is a Mexican priest, and has no sort of relationship with Europe, the Emperor could not have said to him, "Carry this souvenir to Europe." Had I been aware of this note before making my journey, I might have drawn special attention to it on the spot; but even as matters stand, I gathered from all that Maximilian died believing the Empress to be dead, even from Canon Soria, who was the supposed Abbé in the note. Therefore, I feel it to be, in some sort, only just towards Sir Theodore Martin to be thus explicit on this interesting feature of the subject.

To return to the tragedy of the execution. "I was a close spectator," said Señor Escoto, "at the fatal scene on that day. I saw the condemned arrive and take their places, after mutual embraces. In reply to the order to do this, Maximilian said to the two, in as common and familiar a tone of voice as that in which one would propose to take a glass of champagne or to do any correspondingly trivial act, 'Vamos Señores?'—'Shall we go, gentlemen?' and then occurred the well-known incident between him and General Miramon, on the latter passing to the left in order to leave the centre for Maximilian. 'General, dijo Maximiliano, un valiente debe ser respetado hasta por los Soberanos; permitidme, pues, que al morir os ceda el puesto de honor'—'General, a brave man must be respected, even by sovereigns; permit me, then, on dying, to concede to you the post of honour.' He also said to Mejia, 'General, what has not been rewarded on earth will assuredly be so in heaven.' Maximilian and Miramon both made short speeches, and the former distributed some pieces of gold among the soldiers. Maximilian passed his hands through his long red beard" (this, says Prince Salm-Salm, was his constant habit), "dividing it and throwing it on both sides over his shoulders; and then he laid both his hands across his breast, as if to point where the balls were to strike him. Miramon gazed with a steady defiance. Mejia's countenance showed not one extraordinary expression, of any sort

or kind ; but he was very sad, having just taken leave of his child and its mother. Then the drums were beat, and amidst a profound silence the following words were spoken with a loud voice from each corner of the four thousand troops drawn up in square : 'El que pidiére gracia en favor de los reos sufrirá la misma pena'—'He who asks pardon in favour of the offenders shall suffer a like punishment.' Multitudes of the people were present outside the lines, but, as may be supposed, no voice was uttered. The signal being then given, the three piquets fired. The two generals fell forward, dead. Maximilian fell upon his right side not dead ; and I heard him say thus, in a smothered tone, 'Hombre ! hombre ! hombre !' three times "—a mild form of Spanish expostulation : Oh ! man ! man ! man ! "On this, the serjeant pointed his sword to his heart, and one of the reserve piquet came forward and discharged his piece in the spot. This *coup de grace* is generally given in the ear, but as Maximilian's head was not to be wounded " (of which anon) "his was given in the heart. I am quite sure the other two died on the spot. A short dead silence then ensued, which was suddenly broken by words of command, the striking up of the bands of the regiments, and all the movements of return."

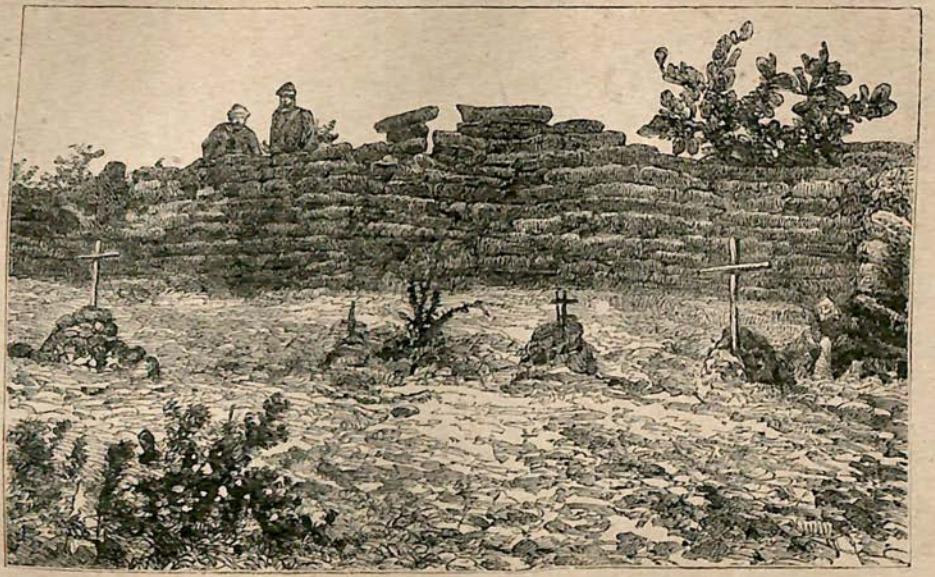
The body of Maximilian was handed over to be embalmed ; those of the two generals were delivered to their friends, and by-and-by there remained

at the Cerro only silence and a solitary hillside, on which for some time afterwards were to be seen three small black crosses to mark the spots on which the three condemned had died.

All must be held to have died nobly: thrice nobly the noble Indian Mejia, who refused to be tempted by life itself to fly alone. Miramon fell, as he had lived, an intrepid soldier. And Maximilian, when he laid his hands upon his breast, must have covered a heart beset by various emotions, among which the sentiments of courage and resignation cannot be denied a place.

It has been written by a late eminent author, in the course of his critical essays, that men who die on a scaffold for political offences almost always die well. He seems to minimize the heroism generally attributed to such deaths. He remarks that the eyes of thousands are fixed upon them; that enemies as well as admirers are watching their demeanour. He notes that every tone of voice and change of colour is to go down to posterity; that escape is impossible, supplication vain; and that in such a situation pride and despair have often been known to nerve the weakest minds with fortitude adequate to the occasion.

To all this it may also be added, that when the mind has been strongly concentrated on any daring enterprise, it has already instinctively accepted the violent alternative that must attend disaster; and that in clambering among the crags and precipices



SCENE OF THE EXECUTION OF MAXIMILIAN.

of existence, it has altogether outgrown and forgotten those sensitive reflections as to fate which belong to life's smoother paths.

But, when even all this has been said, there still remains the shock of meeting Death before Nature, in her own course, is prepared to part with Life. To defy consequences, before they come, is one thing; to meet them well, when they really come, is another. To know that your own untimely end has been brought upon you by yourself; to be forced to acknowledge a certain well-known phrase, not as a mere general figure, nor, indeed, as a figure at all, but with a true, close, real meaning, "In the midst of life *I* am in death;" to perish, not in the mere flicker of old age, when dissolution can be scarcely called a change, but, when the pulse is bounding and the blood is high, to have to part, by violence, with life—

> "This sensible warm motion to become
> A kneaded clod"—

surely they, who, in such case, firmly stand to die, cannot be denied the name of Hero.

"I will tell you of a small but touching circumstance," said Señor Escoto. "On the night previous to the execution, General Escobedo had gone to bid the Emperor good-bye, and he had given Escobedo a photographic portrait of himself. I have seen this in Escobedo's collection, and have read the words which Maximilian had written on it, as showing how

his mind was preoccupied. The month was left out and the writing read thus: 'Al Señor General en Jefe: Querétaro: 18 de 1867.'" He was waked in his last sleep by this visit, to his regret.

When all was over, a tardy despatch arrived, written by Mr. Seward to Señor Romero, the Mexican Minister at Washington, under date of the 21st June, stating that he, Mr. Seward, was authorized to say that the Emperor of Austria would restore the Archduke to all his rights if his life were spared. This was to "breathe his dead news in as dead an ear." Under date of 6th April, Mr. Seward had written in a rather peremptory style to Señor Lerdo de Tejada, to which the latter had replied in a corresponding style, heavily accusing Maximilian.*

I will now mention the special incident I have referred to, which I will propose as an answer to the question—Why was Maximilian the only one of the three that did not die on the spot? Maximilian was exceedingly anxious about his face; he made great interest that his countenance should not be wounded at the execution, stating, as the ostensible reason for this anxiety, that in case it was so his mother would not recognize him when carried to Europe dead. Without dwelling on the circumstance that his body was, in any event, to be embalmed, and that his face could in no case admit of much

* "Intervention Française en Mexico." E. Lefèvre, Bruxelles and London, 1869.

recognition—indeed, Dr. Basch says that it was quite black—so much did he press this point, that the colonel in charge of the prisoners consented to speak to Escobedo, who ordered that means should be taken to gratify Maximilian's desire. "I was present," said Señor Escoto, "when the order was given to the firing party, who were summoned for that purpose. It was impressive. The colonel addressed them in this form: 'Soldiers! The general commanding in chief has given orders that great care is to be taken at the execution of Maximilian of Hapsburg' (they never called him anything else but once) 'that no shot wounds his face. If, therefore, any such wound occurs, inasmuch as it will be impossible for me to know from whose piece the ball was discharged, I will secure the guilty one by ordering every one of you to be shot.' A dead silence ensued. This form of order was repeated to Maximilian, and he was thus quieted upon the subject of his curious precaution."

Now, how do I connect this order with the discharge of the piquet having been ineffective? Thus: by the position of the wounds. The soldiers were naturally very fearful of wounding the head and face; they therefore took good care to fire low: and on the report of Dr. Basch, who examined the body, only three out of the six balls entered the breast; three were low down in the abdomen; and Señor Escoto, who was present at the embalming, told me

with certainty that one was in the very groin. As regards the three that entered the breast, Dr. Basch says they were mortal, but not instantaneously so; and I observe this remark by the doctor—that the rifles having been fired at a very short distance, all the balls perforated the body, and none were found in it. I know nothing of the special character of the wounds of the two generals, except that neither of their faces was wounded, though no orders on the subject had been given. And it is only natural to suppose that had all the six balls entered Maximilian's breast he would, like them, have died on the spot.

Such is a faithful interpretation of all the incidents of the execution as I heard them recounted by Señor Joaquin Escoto, the Assesor in the cause, after I returned from Querétaro to Mexico. But before starting thither by the early Diligencia, which was to leave at half-past five o'clock on the Monday morning, I availed myself of the Sunday, which was a brilliant day, to call a carriage and drive out alone to the Cerro, where I dismissed it. This time I went to the top of the mount, only a few hundred feet high—perhaps not more than two hundred—and I walked about in the quiet sunshine, gazing on the distant and pleasing view of the city, and upon the panorama of all the quiet, beautiful country which the extensive view mapped out before me. In front and beyond Querétaro rose the great broad road to

Mexico, down which I had safely come, and by which I hoped safely to return, but down which Maximilian so weakly suffered himself to be beguiled by the flattering lips that persuaded him to abandon his thrice-declared intention to abdicate at Orizaba. The mount was sprinkled with shepherd boys and their browsing goats, and with tethered cows and horses. It had been a sort of fortified camp during the siege of Querétaro, and hither, I called to my remembrance, Maximilian had walked when the city was betrayed, at early morning on the 15th of May, 1867, by his chosen general and chosen friend, Lopez. It was here that he delivered up himself and sword to General Escobedo, and there it was, by those jumbled stones below, that he was shot; thus "being taken to the place whence he came." And all for what? And why these long years of fighting, ending in this city besieged, and these executions in these pastoral scenes?

> "The death-shot, hissing from afar,
> The shock, the shout, the groan of war,
> Reverberate along that vale,
> More suited to the shepherd's tale."

Really and truly, it was all a mere vile civil war between party and party, carried on in the desperate and audacious attempt, supported, if not actually suggested, at first, and deserted at last, by a foreign Emperor and his foreign armies, to establish a foreign form of government in the person of a foreign

Prince! Had it not been for the closing tragic scene here enacted on this Cerro de las Campanas, nothing could have prevented the whole course of these events from exhibiting a purely ridiculous, albeit terribly bloody comedy, even to the end! Surely it has been a new lesson to those who would assume the insolent arrogance of forcing any form of government upon a foreign country. And equally surely, if Mexico cannot learn an everlasting lesson from it all, she can never be a nation; for had she been really and truly one before, had she not been in a state of the unhappiest internal chaos, the intrusion could never have been ventured on.

All nations, it is true, have had their revolutions, and we may be reminded that we have had our own. I am in the habit, indeed, of saying that the English, with all their instinctive disposition to regularity, industry, and repose, are full of revolution and resistance, at command. They are like a hive of bees: let them work in their own way, and they are busy and harmless; disturb them, and they will sting you to death. But we are far from being chronically revolutionary; and not to be able to keep out of revolutions is simply to be weak and incompetent, and to provoke foreign aggression, for the purpose of possessing what is worth having.

When I returned to the city, I walked along the causeway over which Maximilian was conducted on leaving the Cerro on that fatal morning, and I

endeavoured to imagine his feelings: desperate in his Mexican fortunes; unhappy in his European relations; tormented by disease. And all before years had come upon him: all at the age of barely thirty-five!

From these reflections I was suddenly roused by three or four cotton-clad boys rushing past me, and crying out "La conducta! la conducta!" Not knowing what they meant, I followed them with my eyes, and presently indistinctly saw the tops of several hooded waggons in a row, coming into the city from the north country. Then I knew that it was a company of waggons under convoy—a mode of travelling with coin and metal under arms, which nothing that has yet occurred in Mexico has availed to render unnecessary.

Returning to my reflections, it is difficult to understand how Maximilian could expect his own life to be spared, if he were once made prisoner; and, as a parallel proposition, it is difficult to blame the Mexican Republic, under all the circumstances, for taking it. Here was a man who confessedly came to establish himself, not by the general acclaim of a nation at unity with itself and waiting for him to obey their call; not even with the invitation to put himself at the head of a large native army warring in support of the general wishes of the nation. He did not come as Richmond or William came to England; but he came professedly by the aid of foreign troops

and foreign funds, having stipulated with a foreign sovereign for the continuance of the troops for the space of four years after his arrival. This was of itself a strange stipulation to make for a person who professed to have come by the will of the people of the country, and little consistent with a legitimate intention of using foreign forces for the sole purpose of giving that country an opportunity to show its real wishes. It looks more like a stipulation against, than for, the nation he came to assume empire over: more like the coming of a conqueror than of a friend. His sword, in truth, was always drawn and always dripping.

But, independently of this view of the case, there is another that seems to me to point in the same direction. It is certain that towards the end of June, 1866, Mr. Danó, the French representative in Mexico, presented to Maximilian the celebrated despatch of M. Drouyn de Lhuys of the 31st of May, in which Maximilian was informed that, unless certain new conditions were complied with (which were impossible), the French troops would be withdrawn with all possible despatch, having regard solely to military convenience.

On receipt of this despatch Maximilian, in just anger, exclaimed in the presence of many persons who hastened to make his words public: "Napoleon is mocking me; there is a formal convention between us, *without which I never would have accepted the*

throne, whereby he guaranteed to me absolutely the aid of the French troops till the end of 1868."

What did he therefore resolve upon? Abdication. He resolved to abdicate. But he allowed himself to be deterred from this wise step by the overbearing resolution of the Empress not to yield their position. And the mad step was suggested by her, and yielded to by him, of her making a voyage to Europe with the wild idea of forcing Napoleon to reverse his decision—he who was being pressed by his own Chambers to wash his hands of a costly, foolish enterprise, and, what was more pressing still, by the impatience of the Government at Washington, whose capacity and intention to interfere, in consequence of the suppression of the rebellion of the Southern States, was, in truth, the death-blow to the Imperial scheme in Mexico, and alarmed Napoleon into a withdrawal of his pledged support.

Again, in the course of a few months—that is to say, on the 28th of September, 1866—Maximilian receives news by the steamer of the 2nd of that month from Southampton that the mission of the Empress has miscarried and that she was seriously afflicted. Here, then, he was therefore doubly called on to return to his first wise resolution, and not only to abdicate, but to regret that he had not done so in the first instance, instead of allowing the Empress to go to Europe. Still he did not take that step. He vacillated and vacillated, knowing he ought to

go, and yet not determining to go. But that the intention was yet at his heart must be evident from his having twice or three times ordered trains for Vera Cruz; and in particular it appears from his having signed a letter, written by his order and addressed to General Marquez, one of his trusted traitors, which I have seen, and a copy of which is in my possession. This letter, with my translation of it, runs as follows:—

"(Copia)

"MI QUERIDO GRAL. MARQUEZ,

"Estando para separarme de nuestra querida Patria; y recordando los buenos servicios que V ha prestado á mi Gobierno, así como su adecion (*sic*) y lealtad, tengo el gusto por medio de esta manifestar a V llevo conmigo los mas vivos recuerdos de gratitud.

"Reciba V la benevolencia de su affectisimo,

"(Firmó) MAXIMILIAN.

"Orizava, 8 de Nbre de 1866."

[TRANSLATION.]

"(Copy)

"MY DEAR GENERAL MARQUEZ,

"Being about to separate myself from our beloved country, and calling to mind the valuable services that you have rendered my Government, as also your adhesion and loyalty, I have the pleasure

by these lines of declaring to you that I carry with me the most lively recollections of gratitude.

"Accept of the goodwill of yours most affectionately,

"(Signed) MAXIMILIAN.

"Orizaba, 8th November, 1866."

Then comes this very weighty question—Under these circumstances might not Maximilian be held liable to the charge of having vexatiously kept up internecine war, and be held personally responsible for all the useless and hopeless bloodshed consequent upon his having allowed himself to be cajoled into endeavouring to maintain a position which he had himself repeatedly declared to be untenable?

But again there was something much above and beyond this charge, which rankled in the minds of the republicans, as the memory of the massacre of Glencoe might in those of the Scotch. I mean the famous or infamous decree of the 2nd of October, 1865, published by a proclamation in the *Diario del Imperio*, under date of the 3rd of that month, wherein the grounds for the decree were arrogantly stated, even at that early date, to be that the struggling war was really at an end; that the Republic was dead; and that, as the "honourable men of the nation" would thenceforth have to fight only with "mere gangs of criminals and highway robbers" ("las gavillas de criminales y

bandoléros"), "indulgence must cease" ("cesa ya la indulgencia").

Then followed the rigorous provision of the decree, which declared, among other articles, that all, whatever their number, who belonged to companies in arms, not legally authorized, should be judged by court martial, without appeal; and, if found guilty of even the bare fact of belonging to such companies, should be shot within twenty-four hours after sentence pronounced. This, then, was the challenge: "He who is caught dies." How far the grounds set forth for issuing this decree could be justified, the scene at the Cerro de las Campanas, so long as nearly two years afterwards, must decide. Its authors had overlooked the thought—

> "Ye do but teach
> Bloody instructions, which, being taught,
> Return to plague the inventor."

Who can reasonably doubt what would have been the fate of the "*criminals and highway robbers*," Juarez, Lerdo Tejada, and Porfirio Dias, had they been made prisoners under that decree? And if doubt do anywhere exist, we have only to look at what occurred in Santa Ána Amaclán, where, on the 13th of the same month of October—ten days only after the issuing of the decree—the "criminals and highway robbers," Generals D. Arteaga y D. Carlos Salazar, and the Colonels Nillagomez and Dias (who could not even have known of the decree), having

been defeated and made prisoners by the imperialist General Mendez, were by him shot on the 21st, under its provisions. Prince Salm-Salm says that, in truth, they all expected to be shot off hand when taken at Querétaro. Of all taken, however, only one was executed off hand, and that one was this same General Mendez who had shot these officers.

Maximilian's friends say that the decree was not his, but Bazaine's, and that it was the Empress who approved it. So be it. But no one can say that Maximilian did not sign it, and sign also the violent proclamation under which it was published; and equally no one can deny that his signature alone could constitute proclamation or decree. I remember that most admirable judge of past days, the late Chief Justice Erle, once charging a jury to the effect that people who did mischief from levity of mind were more dangerous to society than even vicious men; for that it did not require vice to make them mischievous; but that they were so by mere caprice, without warning, as it were, or easily at the suggestion of others. Everybody was ashamed of this decree, except, perhaps, Bazaine. And Maximilian, when he signed it, signed his own death-warrant, by anticipation.

But were or were not those three deaths at Querétaro, after all that had occurred and might still threaten to occur, politically necessary? Could those three executions bear the vital test, the only test that could

possibly justify them, of having been absolutely necessary for the public safety? Speaking of the three victims as individuals, what tongue but might decline to cry, Yes? Speaking of them as leading representatives of the at last suppressed sanguinary intrusion, who outside Mexico would have a right to cry, No?

What made Maximilian hesitate about carrying out his better thoughts of abdication? Many causes. Fidelity to his friends, though he had really decided to go; his love of empire; his weakness for adulation; the peculiarly unpleasant relations that existed between him and his brother, the Emperor of Austria; the unhappy and perhaps humiliating position which he would occupy at Miramar, if he returned; the desolation of that hearth; the inevitable ridicule that would attach to him abroad of having virtually been sent out as Emperor, and ordered to abdicate and come back again, as no Emperor at all, by Napoleon III.; all these disgusts being exacerbated by the insolent pressure put upon him by Bazaine, under his master's orders, "not to force abdication, but to do everything he could to provoke it." As regards the political branch of these reasons, Senor Arrangoiz* publishes a very ugly letter of M. Eloin, received by Maximilian on the 15th of November, 1866, and also states that the Austrian *Chargé d'affaires* in Mexico had informed him

* "Mejico desde 1808 hasta 1867." Madrid, 1871.

that his Master would not allow him to enter his dominions should he be forced to retire from Mexico. As regards the domestic branch of the reasons, Señor Arrangoiz also states that Maximilian had, at the same time, received a letter from his mother, the Archduchess Sophia, bidding him rather bury himself under the ruins of Mexico than submit himself to the demands and requisitions of the French. This phrase I have also seen quoted, with the addition of the word "Emperor." And recurring to the Archduchess, I may add that Señor Escoto spoke to me of a letter which he said was known to have been written by her, the terms of which were so strong that, not having seen them in print, I forbear to repeat them.

But was he a weak man besides? Weak and vain. Enough of this weakness, without even enlarging on it, is shown in his choice of men, and his behaviour towards them. Take Miramon, for example. He practically banished him, to begin with, in order (says Dr. Basch) to free himself of the Conservative party, whom, and particularly the clergy, he and the Empress appear to have slighted and offended, though it was at their call they came to take the throne; and he listened to him only when he was fatally urged by him to go to Querétaro from Orizaba. Yet the Emperor, while at Querétaro, invariably postponed Miramon to Marquez and to Lopez; and found out his value, as a true soldier, only just in time to give him the place of honour to be shot in!

His relations with Marquez are shown by the letter I have copied above. This man, never much confided in by others, left Querétaro, on the most trustworthy possible commission from the Emperor, to bring forces and provisions from Mexico to the almost despairing besieged city. He did not attempt to fulfil these vital duties (as we have seen), but turned aside after his own devices: went to attack Porfirio Dias at Puebla; behaved very badly to his army, according to Prince Salm-Salm; threw the artillery at last into a deep gorge, and fled back to Mexico, alone, declaring all was lost. The Emperor died believing him a traitor. He is now in Cuba, I am told, and dare not show his face in Mexico.

But what of Lopez?—he who betrayed the city and brought in the enemy by night, even to his Emperor's very bedside! Colonel Lopez was Maximilian's bosom friend and counsellor; Maximilian was godfather to one of Lopez's children. "And I decorated that man on that very night," exclaimed the Emperor with bitterness (referring to the betrayal of the city), "with the medal of valour!"

His ultimate but too late opinion of these two worthies while he was in prison, awaiting death, whither they had so effectually contributed to send him, is thus given by Dr. Basch in his Prison Diary, under date the 31st of May, 1867: "The Emperor has often said to the enemy's officers, 'If Lopez and Marquez were put into my hands, with full liberty to

choose between the two, I should let Lopez go, as a traitor from pure wickedness; and I would hang Marquez, as a traitor by calculation and cold blood."

"With his profound knowledge of men," writes Señor Arrangoiz, "Padre Miranda, when he returned from Miramar, remarked that we had erred in the choice of a sovereign; that he had been much dissatisfied with the conversation he had held with Maximilian in Miramar, which showed him to be a person of levity of mind."

And in this levity of mind was included that notable small vanity which all, even his friends, attribute to him. Curious as the observation may seem to some, when I visited Miramar there was something in its general adornment that spoke to me of the trifling mind. Whatever Maximilian might have proved to be through a course of private life, he was totally unfit for the arduous and dangerous position which he too thoughtlessly permitted himself to be persuaded to assume. Strange, indeed, it is that, having been, in a certain sense, the leader of the Liberal party in Austria, even to the annoyance of his brother, the Emperor, he should have embarked for Mexico at the call of the Conservatives, and, indeed, the Ultramontanes; strange, again, it is that so wise a monarch as King Leopold should have countenanced the scheme, the only one member of all that Royal Family who opposed it having been the French ex-Queen, Amelia, who most shrewdly

objected that Maximilian and her grand-daughter were going, not so much by the call of the Mexican people, as by the bidding of the Emperor Napoleon; and strange, again, it is that, after having formally renounced all pretensions to the Austrian crown on so doing, he should have resented the publication of that act to the Reichstag, and actually appealed to jurisconsults as to his right to repudiate the renunciation, as illegal. This proceeding did much to compromise him with all his Mexican friends, as they felt that he was merely using them as a stepping-stone to his ultimate ambitions; and it is heavily charged against both him and the Empress that they very soon began to slight and offend the Conservatives, even calling them *pelúcas viejas* (old periwigs), etc., with the object (not very successful) of propitiating the Liberals. The Empress appears to have taken no care to conceal the fact that, whether courteous (as she well could be) or heedless of all courtesy, she carried herself far above all around her; and Maximilian followed her example, with intermissions of a less unbending nature; though Señor Arrangoiz says that he could be false.

Who can read the picture that is drawn of these distinguished personages, while paying a visit in their early youth to our Queen and the Prince Consort, which is set forth in the fourth volume of Sir Theodore Martin's work, and imagine that either could be else than excellent in all things? But a little more of

years, and a great change of position, and of those surrounding us, with whom we are brought in close and serious contact, alter or develop features in the general character. We are but of malleable metal!

"On the 14th" (June, 1857), writes Sir Theodore, "the Archduke Maximilian arrived in London. The Prince had not previously met him, but he appears to have felt drawn towards him at once. On learning the Duke's engagement to the Princess Charlotte of Belgium some months before, he had written to tell the Archduke of the pleasure with which the Queen and himself had heard of the betrothal 'of their dear cousin to a young Prince of whom we hear nothing but good,' and her alliance with whom was one purely of the heart."

Then follows a phrase which, I must be permitted to say, offers to my mind an expression of that singular constitutional purity of sentiment which I always seemed to discern in the mind of the Prince, so far as one merely of the public could judge of him: "'May Heaven's blessing,' he added, 'be upon a connection so happily begun, and in it may you both attain life's true happiness, which is only to be found in a home where the heart finds satisfaction for its wants.'" We may be permitted to admire what we may not aspire to attain to.

From the same pages I will now venture to give an extract from a letter of our Queen:

"The Archduke arrived in time to be present at

the christening of the Princess Beatrice in the private chapel at Buckingham Palace, on the 16th of June, In a letter written just after the ceremony by the Queen to his future father-in-law, we find him spoken of in the warmest terms :—

"'The christening of little Beatrice is just over, and was very brilliant and nice. We had the luncheon in the fine ball-room, which looked very handsome. The Archduke (who has been here since Sunday evening) led me to the chapel, and at the luncheon I sat between him and Fritz. I cannot say how much we like the Archduke; he is charming, so clever, natural, kind, and amiable, so English in his feelings and likings, and so anxious for the best understanding between Austria and England.'"

Then follows what is to me a very striking expression: "'With the exception of his mouth and chin he is good-looking, but I think one does not in the least care for that, as he is so very kind, clever, and pleasant.'"

It is exactly in that mouth and chin—so defective that her Majesty even writes of them—that are to be physiognomically read the undoubted weak and failing parts of Maximilian's character; and it was exactly by that capacity for being 'so very kind, clever, and pleasant,' when and where he thought it suited to be so, that he unquestionably engaged so many hearts in Mexico.

Alas! for Maximilian, that in his life's career the

pictures and the prophecies of Windsor were hurled to the winds; and, finally, alas! for the Vacillations of Orizaba.

In Orizaba were hanging the very scales of his existence—thence to Vera Cruz, and to live; or thence to Querétaro, and to die! Yielding, at last, to the over persuasions of Miramon, Marquez, and Padre Fisher, as well as to other unhappy contending influences, he chose Querétaro:

Λίπε δέ ἑ Φοῖβος Ἀπόλλων.
"Then Phœbus left him."

Betrayed in the dead of night by the very man with whom, but a few hours before, he had confidentially planned escape, and on whom, in spite of every warning, he had constantly bestowed confidence and honours—arraigned before a tribunal, by whom he, too surely, already stood condemned—he was delivered over to prison and to death. His body was embalmed, and, after some seeming harsh denials, was committed to the care of Admiral Tegethoff, for transmission to his native land; and the same vessel—the *Novára*—which, then three years ago, had brought him, as an Emperor, to the shore, was there again, in mourning, to carry but a corpse away.

CHAPTER XI.

LAST DAYS AT MEXICO.

IT is only fair to the unwieldy machine that rumbled and rattled out of the hotel courtyard at half-past five in the bright morning of a Monday, to record that it kept its proper hours on my return journey; that we slept at Destello at night, with as good a supper and beds as could be expected, and arrived at Tula during the following afternoon, whence I took the railway as I had done in coming, and reached flat, straight-streeted, cubic-housed Mexico at night. As I changed immediately to the railroad from such road travelling, as I have described, it may be imagined how profoundly I realized the luxury of the latter!

On starting from Querétaro, I took good care to occupy No. 4, and to keep it, till arriving, although there was no storm or appearance of storm whatever; and one or two of my fellow-passengers, being more acrobatic than myself, as well as masters of as much of that art as is essential for preserving one's self

on the outside of a Mexican Diligencia, over Mexican roads, relieved the inside by venturing the ascent by turns. Being rested in No. 4, with my back to the mules and horses, I was rather less forced to fight with impossibilities than when approaching Queré-taro, in trying to look back upon the scene as it wore its morning's aspect. Surely no one could deny the beauty and fertility of the vast expanse of country that one can gaze on from the Cuesta China!

We were, of course, attended by our military escolta, which was changed from time to time, and galloped by our side and passed before us, and then pulled up and let us pass them, just as if they were dodging us in a pleasant ride on horseback, instead of guarding us from robbers; and as regards guns, swords, and pistols, and ornamental girdles of cart-ridges, I am inclined to think they were not so intrusively visible on the return journey. There sat opposite to me a passenger rather advanced in age, whom I considered to be rather awkward with one of his legs in the necessary manœuvring of those difficult limbs in inconvenient vehicles, but whom I observed the officer in command of the escort rode up to and saluted with full military etiquette. He turned out to have been one of Maximilian's generals, his leg having been wounded in battle; and he was also mentioned to me as having been one of the most uncompromising pursuers of the

brigands, when in command of his district, shooting them down as if under a decree of the 3rd of October. And well done, too! Highway robbers and burglars ought to be shot like rats.

The old general was so courteous and so dignified, offering us the "little glass" at the station where he left us, that I quite regret missing his name; and, though one really could not entertain any instant terror of bandoléros, yet his absence suggested the loss of a protector, though the escorts, of course, continued; while his presence and the respect shown to him gave evidence that internecine rancour was perishing, and that that same railway, of which I have already spoken, and which now again was showing its banks and cuttings and its groups of workmen, would soon contribute to sow industry and commerce broadcast over the land.

One naturally feels rather strange in being carried through the country amidst armed fellow-passengers and escorts, but the wildness of the people, their general poverty and heedless dispositions, and the great sparseness of population, offer an easy explanation of such a state of affairs. And the old system thus engendered will, very likely, overlap, for some time, a general improvement. But the Americans, who, it seems to me, must be the chief instruments of this improvement, and the great introducers of the spade, will not be very apt masters at teaching the abandonment of the revolver. It will be a sign of

great advancement in Mexico when the carrying about of arms ceases to be as much a matter of course as the putting on of a hat or coat, which it is now. In our own case in England, it is true that it is not so very long ago, considering the length of our history as a nation, that every gentleman carried his rapier; even Boswell did so! But I have observed, in such intercourse as I have had with the Latin races, that there is a natural carelessness of life—an undervaluing of it, as we should call it. "Did you kill him, then?" "Of course I did. He grossly insulted me." This might be called almost a common phrase among a certain class: and it acts both ways. People seem to part with life as indifferently as they take it. A striking instance of this feeling occurred at Querétaro, as is related by Prince Salm-Salm of General Mendez, when he was caught to be shot upon the spot: "Next morning I stood with others near the window, when Mendez was led through the passage opposite us. He walked fast, as usual, *and smoked a cigar;* when he saw us he smiled, and waved adieu with his hand. He was being led to the external wall of the Plaza de Toros, where he was to be immediately shot by a detachment of the Cazadores de Galeano." I dare say, if the truth were known, he had a cigar in his mouth when he fell. Nor let it be supposed it was mere braggartism if it was so. No such thing; it was a strong flavour of indifference to life; and on the spot he is reported to have been defiant; insisting

on turning his face to the piquet, though it was desired to degrade him by shooting him in the back.

But before leaving the subject of the Diligencia, I must say one word on the subject of the coachmen. The work that these men go through is surprising. They have eight, and sometimes, as we had, nine hard-mouthed animals to drive, and to drive over what may be deemed impassable roads; nor are the teams always composed of horses, or of mules, but often of a mixture of the two. The men also have to tend their animals and to be about at dawn to start again, having been driving the whole day before. What would our old four-horse coachmen have said to such work as this?—Sir Vincent Cotton, on the Brighton "Age," for example, by whose side I have often sat. He would come down the road as far as the meet of the up-coach, where he would change with that most regular man from Brighton, whose name I forget, who was always on his box to start precisely as the first stroke of noon sounded in Castle Square. This man would never go to London; Sir Vincent would never leave it; and each took the other's coach back, and went through their day's work, bowling along the fine road with their neat teams, and knowing nothing of their horses after throwing down the reins.

Another good trait I must also mention in these men. They are infinitely superior to the Spanish coachmen, in that they do not use the abominable

language of many of those drivers; language, however, not used in rage and fury, but as a careless matter of course; and, to my surprise, language sometimes very freely printed by some of our tourists! I once asked a coachman and guard, in Spain, why on earth they were continually crying out such things. "No hace mal" ("It does no harm"), was the reply. That is their view of the case.

Bad roads, and hard mouths eight in number, and sometimes nine, are certainly greater trials of the temper than driving pretty teams along pretty roads halfway down to Brighton, and therefore, though I never heard Sir Vincent use bad language, perhaps he had no excuse for it. I don't say the general roads in Spain at all approached those (so called) in Mexico. On the contrary, I have found them good. But the piece I was passing over at the time I refer to, lay between two ends of railway works not then connected, from Antequera to Loja, on the line from Malaga to Granada. That small portion was very Mexican indeed, and we had nine animals, but in twos, the leader running single with a postilion upon him, to whom a singular catastrophe occurred. The wheelers only were reined; the next six ran without any guide, and followed the postilion. Thus we went on miraculously, until down came the leader! The postilion did not, strictly speaking, come down with him, but he spun head over heels in the air; and I am still under the firm impression that he spun

over twice before he landed, or rather mudded, into a fearful quagmire; and there, during the loud catastrophe of stoppage and confusion, he lay long enough to make us fear the almost inevitable result that ought to have followed, and that his neck was broken. Happily it was not so; it was only that he was fairly, or foully, stuck and nearly smothered, so that when he did get up, rather more mud than man, and burst out laughing at himself, we burst out laughing too, at what, like many thousand other things in life, rested on a razor's edge between farce and tragedy. But in any other country than Spain, excepting of course Mexico, the upshot would have been tragedy.

When I finally came back again to Mexico, after making all these excursions, I began to think my time was running out, so that I counted my remaining days in the capital and turned them to the best account. The result of my interviews with Señor Escoto I have already recorded, and by him I was also introduced to Señor D. Licenciado Lancaster Jones, to whom I owe many courtesies; he was at one time Minister of Justice in Mexico and a supporter of the attempted empire. He is a grandson of the famous Dr. Lancaster, who introduced among us the Lancastrian or Madras system of education, which formerly prevailed at Charterhouse School. Among other objects I had in view, I particularly sought a presentation to General Porfirio Dias, whose name appears so prominently

through all the annals of Maximilian's career as an uncompromising political and military opponent, and who, being really the only leading survivor of those unhappy times now resident in the country, still exercises a powerful influence over its destinies, and is looked up to as one of her guiding capacities. By the aid of my friend, Mr. Allsopp, an introduction was arranged through a personal friend of the general's, and we went together one morning to his house, where I was received with much courtesy and honoured with a prolonged interview. During the conversation, the general ranged over a variety of topics relating to the agricultural and commercial prospects of the country, and its desire to take a position and establish advantageous intercourse with others.

General Porfirio Dias was born, as I have said, in the city of Oaxaca, on the 15th of September, 1830. His parents intended him for the bar, and he studied in the college of Oaxaca until he took his degree in arts. But his disposition inclined him to arms, and he entered the service in 1854, under the command of Captain José Maria Herrera. Having completed his first campaign, he returned to his studies, but again entered upon his military career, and, as we all know, acted a very prominent and important part in the late war. In 1865 he had a very narrow escape. He was besieged in the city of Oaxaca, which capitulated to Marshal Bazaine on the 9th of

February of that year, and General Porfirio Dias was taken prisoner and carried to Puebla, where he was lodged successively in the fortresses of Loreto, Concepcion, and Compañía. Here he remained until the 21st of September, 1866, when, very fortunately for the republican cause, he managed to escape at midnight, letting himself down at the corner of the tower by a rope, to the infinite peril of his life, not only by running the risk of a fall, but also of a shot from the sentinels when he had reached the ground.

After leaving and reflecting on this interview, I could not but deplore the exceedingly anomalous position in which England and Mexico now stand as regards one another. There are no relations of any kind between their two Governments; there is neither Minister nor Consul to represent diplomacy or commerce between them. Yet all old sores ought long since to have been healed by time, as they have been indeed with France, who was the chief offender; though in this case it is only fair to remember that these relations have been established with a republican Government, which overthrew the imperial one that had offended. What prevents a reconciliation? Is it a scarcely worthy pride on the part of England which dictates that Mexico broke off relations, and therefore Mexico must ask to renew them? Surely England is too great and powerful a nation to require to sustain too cold a dignity by such a feeling as this towards Mexico, which, being only a country rising

from revolutions, might feel herself humiliated by coming forward to beg again for the friendship she had herself thrown off, without even feeling confident that such advances would be received in good part. What strong individuals can do, strong nations can do likewise; and who more fitted to show how to thaw the ice that still freezes between the two countries than the courteous and conciliatory noble lord who graces our Foreign Portfolio at this moment? He may depend upon it, he will be met with a willing response. Mexico knows well that the re-establishment of relations with England would be a great help to her, both at home and abroad—at home, because commerce and immigration would increase; abroad, because a European position is everything to her. England also must know, on her part, that the estrangement is costing her thousands and thousands of pounds in her commerce, while other nations are profiting by the estrangement. I cannot believe that this unhappy and pernicious state of affairs can much longer continue. There are too many English interests already existing in Mexico to be thus left unprotected and thrown on foreigners for representation; and the further growth of them is chilled and blighted by the want of those relations which England owes to her own industries as much as she does, in a moral sense, to her relative position towards Mexico. These relations the movement of even her little finger would induce Mexico to seek to re-establish. This result

would add new strength and wealth to Mexico, and new honour and wealth to England.

It was not till after my interview with General Porfirio Dias that I visited the Chamber where the deputies sit. I was invited to do so by a deputy, who was also with the general, and I cannot but say that I was somewhat amused by finding that it was not a building expressly constructed for so solemn a purpose, but that it was a theatre; a theatre, pure and simple, with boxes, pit, and gallery, all consecrated to the use of the legislature.

"Here," said I, on our entering, "one might literally satirize politicians as being only actors."

"Yes," was the reply; "but I trust we have no more tragedies in preparation."

"Nor farces?" I asked, jokingly.

"My friend," said the deputy, "we are *farceurs* all round the world!" And so we are.

As I am always falling into making comparisons, I was reminded by this Chamber of Deputies of that in Rio de Janeiro. When I was first ushered into one of the *tribunas* of that Assembly to listen to a debate, I was struck by the enormous low-arched roofing that seemed to weigh down upon the members' heads, bearing anything, to be sure, but the likeness of a theatre.

"Why should they build it in that form?" I asked.

"Ah," was the reply, "it is only an adopted building. It was originally a prison!"

In both cases the adaptation is not less original than the first intention; but, on the whole, I am inclined to consider the adaptation of the theatre as the brighter and the happier of the two. And it is only fair to add, as regards the Mexican Chamber, that the one originally devoted to the use of the Deputies was burnt down in 1872.

Falling into a comparison between the Chambers of the two countries leads me into comparing the two modes of representation; and this not with the slightest intention of setting them in opposite scales, but simply for the purpose of making each understood more clearly. Brazil, we know, is an hereditary empire, with Emperor and two Chambers, and the country is divided into provinces. The election of the Upper Chamber, or Senate, is peculiar. Each province is entitled to as many as the constitution gives it; ruling at half the number of its Deputies. For simplicity's sake, suppose a Senate already to exist, as thus constituted. Then, when a vacancy occurs, the province in question votes for the candidates who present themselves; and of these the first, second, and third on the poll are returned to the Emperor. Out of these three his Majesty chooses which he pleases, and that chosen one is senator for life at a salary. Each of these provinces returns its imperial deputies, and has a President set over it, and enjoys, moreover, the right to elect its own provincial Assembly for provincial matters. But the President is

nominated and removed by the Crown at pleasure, and during the eight years I lived in São Paulo I counted eight Presidents; so that I enjoyed a rather extensive acquaintance among those worthy representatives of the Crown.

Mexico is equally governed by three branches in the legislature. There is the President of the Republic, who is elected by all the country for four years; and there are two Chambers—the Senate, who sit in the palace, and the Deputies, who sit in the theatre. The country is divided into States, not into provinces only; and these States are much more independent of the executive than are the Brazilian provinces. The Senate stands on a totally different footing from the Brazilian. Supposing one to exist already, then half go out every two years; always the eldest half, so that none remain in for more than four years: there is no life-senatorship. They, also, are remunerated. The States elect their Senators and their Deputies; the President has no voice at all in this matter. Then, as regards the States themselves, they elect their own chiefs for four years, and they are called Governors, and not Presidents; nor can the President of the Republic interfere with the election. They have also their State Deputies, especially elected by themselves. Clericals are much more strictly kept out of political positions in Mexico than they are in Brazil.

Three practical points remain to be noticed in

the Mexican constitution, as touching those who would seek their fortune in the riches of this country. The freedom of the press is guaranteed by the constitution. Church and State are declared entirely independent of one another, nor can Congress pass any law which shall establish or prohibit any religion. Matrimony is declared to be a civil contract.

I am not going very far into constitutional questions here, but I will simply add that the number of deputies in Mexico, with its 9,300,000 inhabitants altogether, amounts to 227. Brazil has a larger population, and is a sound established and highly respectable empire, whose credit stand in the first class among nations, whose people love industry and orderly liberty, and, notwithstanding a few slight grumblings now and then about personal government, who also love their Emperor, for they know that he loves his country. But their Chamber of Deputies consists of only 122 members! I remember what occurred in one of the conversations with which I was occasionally favoured by the then Prime Minister—he who has lately died with the laurels of the Act of the 28th of September, 1871, about his brow—I mean the Visconde do Rio Branco.

In the course of our observations I said, "I will tell you one thing your Excellency should do."

His face amused me; it had this exact expression: "Upon my honour! now, I should really be very curious to know what it is you are going to say." So he asked, "What?"

"Increase the number of your deputies," said I.

He laughed and said, "How could we manage them?"

"That is just the point, your Excellency," I said; "the Government has no right to manage them."

"But I mean, how will the President of the Chamber manage them?"

"Pardon me; but in that respect they are not managed now; for interruptions (*apartes*) are allowed at every moment and in any manner, so that one scarcely knows who is the real speaker."

"That is too true. How many have you?"

"Six hundred and fifty-eight," I said, "and the Speaker manages them all!" It must be remembered, however, that this was before the *clôture* days. I should not be so boastful now! Were this conversation taking place now, how might not his Excellency retort upon me! Not to pursue this question farther, however, I have often wondered how it is that a strong advancing empire like Brazil still continues with such an insignificant number of Deputies.

My date for leaving the city of Mexico, if I was to sail from Vera Cruz on the 1st of September, would have been the 30th of August. Something yet remained to be done, however, on the road thither; for I had not seen Jalapa, the former capital of the state of Vera Cruz, whither a railway runs from that city for several miles along the Tierra Caliente, in a northwesterly direction, and then strikes up the hills to

reach the city. I therefore was anxious to leave Mexico a day or two earlier than was necessary to make the more direct journey; and, this desire tallying more or less with a visit of inspection Mr. Jackson was about to make to Jalapa, it was arranged that we should go together.

Therefore I took a quiet view of the capital before leaving it, and walked slowly up the long, straight street of San Francisco, with all its varied crowds and shops, continuing the same line through the Plateros, Nos. 1 and 2, into the large square where the cathedral stands; and I mounted the roof and surveyed the city below, and the flat, green oval valley far and wide, and the surrounding belts of mountains, with their two great snow-capped monarchs, King and Queen. I suppose I shall never see this scene again, and I must carry it, as, indeed, I do easily, as Wordsworth did the daffodils, in the "inward eye." "Farewell, city of Mexico," I thought to myself, as I gazed down upon it, "I suppose for ever! I think much more of what you are likely to be than what you are to-day! You are even now a large, and in some respects an active, city with your 250,000 inhabitants; but you are only to-day beginning that life which is born of intercourse with other and more advanced nations. Commerce has been the world's great civilizer, and it must be yours. On commerce, and the wealth it brings, you can found art, and even luxury. Art, founded on industry, may be a strong

growth; and luxury must be always found hand in hand with Art, deny it as we may. But, unless there exist national wealth to support it, Art cannot permanently flourish. What they say you were of old I can only read of; what you are to-day is not yet beautiful, and they who write about your 'Phœnix-like splendour rising from the ashes of the past,' write only nonsense; and, in truth, they deride you. From to-day is likely to begin your improvement, if only your country will respect itself, and respond to the call that is now being made on it by those who believe that they can at last trust you to drop your miserable internal squabblings, and carve out for yourselves a future manly course. Remember for ever the Cerro de las Campanas! On the 19th of June, 1867, you wished to read the world a lesson, but you read yourselves a lesson likewise; you vowed a vow before the world, and you sealed that vow with blood. You vowed for independence; and therefore you vowed for all that independence demands of those who claim it—public order, public faith, righteous laws, industry, frugality, perseverance; finally, peace among yourselves, on which must depend peace with others. Buen Viaje! A' Díos!"

As I was alone, and only thinking in the air, there was nobody to offend, and nothing said to offend. But I drew this picture of the future to myself, from a sort of inward persuasion that Mexico is saying these things to herself, and a great deal more that is

good. If she follows in such courses, let a few years pass and she will scarcely be able to believe what she has accomplished.

When I came down from gazing on this doubtless impressive panorama, which awakens so many very strange and varied recollections and associations, I walked under the trees in the Plaza, and stood and watched the living concourse of cars upon the tramways, which, as I have said before, all meet at a central group of stations in the large square in front of the cathedral; the present beauty of this square being due to the Empress. Formerly it used to be occupied with carts and waggons. Then I strolled under the Arcades, and, turning to the right, walked down the long street parallel to the San Francisco, passing for the twentieth time under other rows of dark, heavy Spanish arcades, which present to me one of the striking parts of the city, and almost the only one. Thus I came for a last business visit to the establishment where I had made my first—the London Bank of Mexico and South America. And here I again felt the advantage of being able to walk away with what I wanted, without being overweighted, or lopsided, with lumbering silver. The paper-money was good for silver; but, then, it was the paper of the bank. The Government, as yet, issue no paper. But they are going to do so, I understand, by virtue of some concession for a grand National Bank. All transactions have hitherto been based on "Pesos fuertes"

—"hard cash." If that basis should be altered, what may happen? Look at Peru: though this may be a strong case. There, at all events, by virtue (or by vice) of paper-money, 44*d.* has dwindled into 3*d.* When a National Bank has the right to issue paper-money, the Government begins to ask for loans: spends them and asks for more. Notes, at last, become very disagreable reading; people also find them too light, and prefer the burden of silver; so to the Bank they go to change them. Says the Bank to the Government, "You have helped us to make a promise which we can't perform, and you yourselves hold little else than those paper promises; are we to suspend?" "Certainly not: that would ruin us." What is the resource? There is an ugly phrase to express this: "Curso forsoso"—"forced currency;" the meaning of which is, that the public are forced to take the promise for the performance. They are forced to take the paper for the silver. This the Government can insist upon: but what they cannot insist upon is, that foreign commerce should be forced to take their paper at their own arbitrary valuation of it. Therefore, down goes the value of the paper peso.

From the Bank I came back to the "Iturbide," called on my friends, and prepared for my departure early on the following morning, when I left every one at my quarters in good temper, having gone through the not very unusual process of paying, as well as packing up.

CHAPTER XII.

TO JALAPA.

WE did not make our journey direct from Mexico to Orizaba, where we were to sleep, for Mr. Jackson had arranged that we should leave the train at the top of the Cumbres, or summits, and go down together by the hand-car or "trolly" (as it is classically called), a small open car, in which two passengers sit with a brakesman. We breakfasted very comfortably at the Esperanza station, but were somewhat disturbed by the sudden appearance of a lowering fog that began to obscure the mountain-tops. This effect always attends the blowing of the well-known wind, called the "Norther." Fortunately, however, the weather cleared as quickly as it had clouded—its capricious exhibitions of temper of this character being well known among mountains—and the pleasure of our excursion was uninterrupted. We went our way, and slowly worked down all through the beauties of the Sierra Madre, and passed the rest of the day at Ori-

zaba, watching all the various Indian workmen at the workshops.

Here, also, is growing into prominence the subject of the discovery of coal—a question of immense importance to Mexico, her railways, her factories, and her haciendas where machinery is to be introduced, concerning which it would be idle to throw away many pages by way of argument and proof. In the state of Vera Cruz, as well as in other districts, there have been what are called "denuncias" of veins of coal, and two small specimens were given to me, coming from different spots. The word I have quoted above literally means "denunciations," and might be thus literally translated by those exact gentlemen who translate "Fait à Paris" at the end of a contract into the hideous English "Done at Paris;" but the word we use as an equivalent for "denuncias" would be "announcement." Public attention is being directed to this important subject, and paragraphs are from time to time published in the newspapers encouraging investigation. How devoutly should the railway company hope for opportune discoveries!

This "trolly" journey was very different from one which I remember making down the Brazilian Serra leading up Nova Fribourgo. That Serra is also a very remarkable one, and the line was constructed on the Fell system, with the two horizontal wheels pressing on the centre rail with very close impact. We

had stayed behind the train, that is, a Brazilian gentleman (a responsible Cabinet Minister, by the way) and myself, on purpose to enjoy the "fly," and as we both knew the Serra, we started with the object of a sensational journey. There were one or two "straights," down which we ran (as the careful brakesman informed us) at sixty miles an hour, he asking us first whether we should like to do so; and down the "straight" line there is no danger provided your car doesn't break.

The centre apparatus gives great sense of security where there are any curves, and in this system they may be rapid. In truth, down the Nova Fribourgo Serra that line winds like a serpent. I forget the length, but I think we ran six miles to catch the engine; and I believe I am right in saying that this mountain line was constructed entirely at the cost of Dr. Bernado, one of the family of the Baraõ de Nova Fribourgo.

From Orizaba we had to start very early, as it was a long journey to Jalapa; so that when we came to the great barranca, or mountain gorge, of Metlac, of which I have before spoken, the dawn was only breaking; and in the deep hollow lay a lazy-looking mass of darkness that would not yet wake up to the call of coming Hyperion. That scene was thus intensified, and looked far more like the entrance attributed to Avernus than anything I remember to have beheld in the Italian Avernus itself; but we passed through

the mystic gloom and mounted safely into now-open day beyond. At Atoyac we came (I know not why) to a stand, and I again dwelt on the rushing waterfall; the cone of forest trees in front; the blue peep of country we had left behind upon its right; and the blue peep of the Tierra Caliente we were going down to, on its left. And into the Tierra Caliente we at length came, and very *caliente* we found it!

We did not go actually to Vera Cruz, but struck off at the station Tejeria, and ran to San Juan with the locomotive. Then began our mules, who drew us famously to Rinconada, where we stopped to breakfast. Thence onwards we still continued through lands exhibiting enormous fertility as regards vegetable life, but very hostile to human health; although, as is the case on the main line of railway, handsome cattle flourished everywhere, the mules we drove being also in first-rate spirits and condition. It was along this line that the old Spanish road used to run to Mexico, and in different parts we observed large remains of it, reminding me of the pieces of the old Roman road to be seen between Terni and the capital. Here also is seen the great Spanish Puente Nacional, which stretches its vast length across the Rio de la Antigua, and is as firm and good now as on the day it was first built. Nor should I omit the ruins of a palace, once belonging to the daring and ambitious President Santa Anna.

The grades and curves on this line are exceedingly heavy and rapid, the former representing in several places as much as eight feet in a hundred of ascent; and it is all the more important to bear these features in mind, because the Mexican Government, without the shadow of a plan being laid before them, have granted a concession for constructing a locomotive line to Mexico, through Jalapa.

As you approach this city the climate becomes salubrious, and there are extensive plantations of coffee and sugar. The city itself stands on a third plain above the actual Tierra Caliente, at a height above the sea of four thousand three hundred feet, that is to say, seven hundred feet above the top of our Snowdon. But heights are nothing in Mexico, and assuredly need not stand in the way of those who can raise money to make railways over mountains without plans. Above the city, and within distance of an excursion, stands the fine mountain seen from far on all sides, called the Cofre de Perote, While in Jalapa, we were lodged in the house of Mr. Thrailkill, who ably and energetically manages the traffic over that branch of the railway.

Jalapa was, in the olden time, the capital of the state of Vera Cruz; but Orizaba has now taken its place, and the old buildings formerly belonging to the authorities still stand, but only in their forlorn pomp. The chief structure is the Market-place, which is, comparatlveiy speaking, the most pre-

tentious building I think I ever saw. The history of its construction, as recounted to me, is this: a certain rich man died and left a certain rich sum of money for building a market-place in the city; whereon the rather unusual circumstance came to pass that it was difficult, not to keep the estimate within the mark, but, to make the estimate come up to the mark, for the money left was excessive. It appearing, however, to be considered a sacred duty to devote the fund to the "object contemplated by the deceased party" (as Lincoln's Inn would say), the architect seems to have set his wits to work to see how many pillars and entablatures he could cram together with that devout object; and it is only fair to confess that he has exhibited great conscientiousness and ingenuity in his work. Howbeit, the money having been with great difficulty exhausted, the quondam capital enjoys a very handsome, though somewhat heavy pillared Market-place. A very good club also exists at Jalapa, and there must be wealth in the town. The streets, as may be supposed, are very steep and irregular, and hence the city is clean.

I know not what else there is particularly to say of Jalapa, unless indeed I should remind my readers, or such of them as may be old enough to remember the "heroic" system of medicine as practised in their youth (as I unhappily do), that they may have had more knowledge of a certain product of Jalapa than they ever had of this its mother country. For here

there flourishes that delicious plant, which, being named too closely after its parent to escape detection, stands with undoubted qualification so to do in the chapter upon "drastics" in that delightful and engaging volume, "Buchan's Domestic Medicine." The sins of Jalapa, in this respect, are in a measure redeemed, however, by the production of a most delicious honey, of which I was desirous to bring away some bottles; for the fashion is to put it into wine bottles, and break their necks by way of opening them. But I was as much balked here as I had been at Athens in asking for the honey of Hymettus. In both these places I had so far to repent of what I so very seldom find I have to repent of—being out of season. I could eat, but not buy.

Part of the day we remained there we spent in witnessing the taming of wild mules, in something, and only something, after the Rarey system. I notice the fact from the force and spirit that these animals belonging to the English Railway Company exhibited. The mule, is indeed, a very awkward animal to deal with at first, and this fact must be borne with, as a feature of that singularly hard and enduring nature that belongs to it. No one who has not proved the fact can imagine how indispensable these animals are in hot countries. One of the Jalapa group particularly ingratiated itself with me, by justifying an estimate I had made of it. I had always observed in Brazil that the mules with zebra-marked hocks were the

most resolute, though not in the sense of mere bad temper. So my choice was attended to, and the animals driven round into a certain entrance-corner, this being the one among them to be trapped. Six several times, to the delight and astonishment of the yard, it took a huge standing jump over the water trough, to escape — a thing never seen before, and one which, I confess, as much astonished me as did the Derby pace of the red bull that was lassoed at the hacienda.

The riding of mules is to a beginner very trying. They have nothing of the elasticity of the horse, either in the pace or in the neck or mouth; it is a monotonous movement. When I first went to Brazil I repudiated the purchase of them; I could not tolerate the pace. But I soon found that a horse was of no use by the side of others' mules. It was I who had to be "broken in" as well as the mule, and, like the mule, I at last "gave in," and ended with two fine animals. The mules in the "States," so far as I can judge from what I hear, are very broad, and are generally looked for with a wide grip. I must still protest that I don't know how I could be broken into that.

Our journey back to Tejiria was performed in first-rate mule fashion, and we arranged for meeting an up train to Orizaba, where we arrived in the evening. This journey from Orizaba to Jalapa in one day is not very often made, but its practicability is worth noticing by the side of the fact recorded

that seven weeks were once occupied by a team of twelve waggons in getting seven miles up to Orizaba; and, again, that only two miles in distance could be accomplished in one month, getting through Cordova The date given me for this last astonishing feat is 1866; that is to say, sixteen years ago. Now, let us suppose, even without applying the old oft-repeated quotation, "Vires acquirit eundo," that Mexico makes a corresponding advance in her general aspect. Who shall say she will not? and, in the supposed case, who can say what she will be?

I had to pass a whole vacant day at Orizaba, and was not much indisposed to do so, looking round the busy shops and wandering into the straggling town, into which life was being filtered by the constant movement of waggons to and from the station. The effect was curious of diving into outside silent streets, and returning suddenly into the life of men, horses, mules, wheels, and merchandise!

Orizaba is esteemed as healthy; the valley is very fertile but flat, and very closely surrounded with mountains. On the nearest of these is the Borego, scored with a road; not, however, one of peace, but of war: it was cut by the French in the late detestable war of invasion, for aggressive objects. There is a fine rush of water through the city, which is turned to account for manufacturing purposes. Serapes are made here of a far less pretentious kind than those sold in Mexico, and, to my taste, more picturesque.

A great deal of the Vera Cruz tobacco grows in the neighbourhood, and there is, I believe, a Government factory of that plant here.

Talking of tobacco, I must not omit to mention that I brought home with me three boxes of cigars of the finest Vera Cruz growth, which are good samples of what the country can produce. They are called "Regalias Especiales," and have the name of Balsay Brothers on the boxes. They cost me five dollars, or £1, per hundred. I am smoking them, duty paid, at less than threepence each, and they have been ranked among the sixpenny and eightpenny cigars at shops. The captains and officers on board who smoke thought me very extravagant, for they were smoking very good "Mexicans" at less! This is not a mere trite fact, for it again serves to show what the country could develop, if populated with industrious numbers. I am not at all sure that many hundreds of Mexican cigars are not sold in London under the magic name of "Cuba;" and this I know to be a fact, that many Cubans have come over to Mexico to establish and develop the tobacco business. Of another fact I am also perfectly well aware, which, though not touching Mexico directly, still serves to show the probability of the Cuba mark extending west as well as east: nearer six than five thousand bales of tobacco are annually exported from Porto Rico to Habana. Some enterprising person in the trade might surely start a good Mexican mark

in London, and make a special business, and very likely a special fortune, of it.

On the morning following, Wednesday, the 31st of August, Mr. Jackson stood ready to return to Mexico, leaving me to go down with Mr. Shirley, who has been attached to the railway during all the troubles of the country, on the following day, when, ere the "passing bell" of adieux had yet tolled forth, he suddenly proposed, "Why shouldn't you come up with me to the top of the Cumbres again, and come down on the cow-catcher of the engine with the goods train we shall meet at Esperanza?" I at once embraced the idea, deferring our final parting embrace till Esperanza, with great satisfaction! So up the Cumbres again I went and breakfasted, and down the Cumbres I afterwards came upon the cow-catcher of the locomotive. "Cow-catcher?" "'Conkey' means Nosey, ma'am," interposed Duff, in "Oliver Twist." "'Of course the lady knows that, don't she?' demanded Mr. Blathers." But she did not know; and as it is just possible that one out of my two or three readers may not know what a cow-catcher is, I will explain that it is a framework of sloping iron bars converging to a point, attached to the front of the locomotive, and lying immediately above the level of the rails, so as to lift up and cast on one side any cow or other unhappy object not worth stopping for, which may cause interruption on the line. You do not, of course, actually sit on the sloping bars, any more than her

Majesty actually walks on sloping ground on "the slopes" at Windsor; but you sit on a horizontal cross-beam just above them, and thus enjoy an entirely uninterrupted view of everything before and around. We came down slowly—not as we did down the Nova Fribourgo Serra—and I had plenty of time to feast upon this splendid scenery for the last time in my visit, and probably in my life. All beautiful indeed for the leisurely beholder, but ugly indeed for the engineer!

Nor, while I gazed on all this varied majesty of nature, did I fail to reflect upon the vast responsibility and the constant anxiety that must always be present in the mind of the General Manager of such a line as this. Be everything in the best of order and the best qualified for the purposes required, still sixty miles of the Mexican Sierra Madre are sixty miles of the Mexican Sierra Madre, with its bridges and its tunnels and its cuttings and embankments, and the perfect working of the locomotives and the brakes; and ever and anon the expected approach of that thrice mortal foe of the engineer, the torrential stream. But to see these works, when made, gives no idea of all that had to be gone through in the making of them—

> "What! man: more water glideth by the mill
> Than wots the miller of."

Engineers are like some mothers—they love best those of their progeny that have given them most

trouble. I will not say quite as much about contractors! But I am sure that my companion felt a pride in the railroad that was not permitted to me.

All this is, indeed, sufficient of itself to keep a man's nerves upon the strain; but what if to this should be added disorder in the country, and the line laid open to depredations and assassination by vile marauders, who seize the occasion of the representatives of order themselves biting and scratching one another at head-quarters, to commit their own excesses? How bitterly and feelingly I heard the recollection of these scenes referred to! "Better come death than a repetition of them," said one married man.

It is to be hoped, and I hope it is to be believed, that in Mexico these days are over, though perhaps not yet so in a neighbouring country. It was only at a late meeting of the London Bank of Mexico and South America that the shareholders felt themselves called upon to pass a vote of thanks to the manager in Peru, for able conduct under trying circumstances of a lawless character; and it is not so very many years past that our present manager in Mexico went through a scene in Lima, which turned out to be ridiculous, but might have ended in murder.

It happened in the short days of usurpation of the brute Gutierrez. Mr. I'Anson was suddenly summoned to the palace, received insultingly, and ordered to sit down and hold his tongue until he was cross-

questioned. When this proceeding began, he was charged with having lent money to Pardo, the opposing President. This being denied, the books were demanded; and these showing nothing of the kind, a printed cheque of the bank was produced, bearing the name of Pardo, for a considerable sum of money.

"I am really surprised," said Mr. I'Anson, "Señor Gutierrez, that you should be so easily taken in. That is no signature of Señor Pardo, nor has the cheque ever been presented. It is a mere forgery on a stolen form."

This fact having been made patent, a sudden turn in affairs took place.

"I shall expect you to make me a written apology, as a British subject," said Mr. I'Anson.

"Certainly, sir," said Gutierrez, "in any form you like."

And this he did. But supposing such an easy dispersion of the charge had not been at hand? And, further, look at the sequel, as showing who and what these people really are who suddenly assume a position which enables them to do such things, and how easily life is dealt with, as I have already said. The above scene took place on a Wednesday. On the Friday night, the corpse of Gutierrez was hanging naked from the Catharine Tower of the cathedral; and on the Sunday (that being the generally chosen day for gaiety and display) it was cut down into a bonfire underneath and burnt! Yea, and with his brother's, too!

My final morning in Mexico country came at last, and at an early hour I left Orizaba with Mr. Shirley for Vera Cruz, where I found that the same vessel, the *Tiber*, that brought me from St. Thomas was to take me there again. Captain Horton, however, had gone home, and Captain Wardell Young commanded in his stead. By the *Tiber* I came, and by the *Tiber* I was to return. It was only by some chance arrangements that this vessel had made the passage this month to Vera Cruz, and I therefore looked on her appearance as a good omen for the awful voyage I was again about to encounter. But people have now grown so careless and callous about traversing the great deep, where inexperience used to find wonders in all things, and they display so much matter-of-course security when they mount the deck of what is, after all, an insignificant structure with a roaring fire in her very entrails, that any serious sort of feeling on the beginning of a voyage seems most ridiculously out of place. I therefore kept all my own solemn reflections—all that threatened to overcome me, at all events—entirely to myself, as such things, by the way, always should be kept. I gradually steeled my trembling nerves to tread the *Tiber's* deck again, in doing which I was yet further fortified by being reminded by one of the officers on board that we had sailed together in her so far back as 1872, with that wide-awake seaman, Captain Gillies. Therefore we were old friends, and I felt she had come on purpose

to take me safely to St. Thomas, a promise which she faithfully fulfilled. There I was to be transferred into the great ship *Don*, for Southampton.

We sailed away from Vera Cruz at five o'clock in the afternoon of Thursday, the 1st of September, and as we gradually increased our distance from that bare, cubic-built city, with its spires and domes and old broken fort standing out upon the long, dry, flat, uninteresting shore, I could not but call to mind again how much Mexico depends upon this place, and how impossible it will be that any duly reasonable progress can be looked for in the country, particularly in the capital, without some very important steps are taken to secure a change in many of the conditions that attach to its port.

As regards improvements in a hygienic point of view, I have already referred to them, but will not quit the shore without doing so again.

Here is the very entrance to Mexico, the great hall-door of the country; and yet everybody (so to speak) is afraid to enter it, though internal wealth is loudly calling out for intercourse.

By the best and latest figures I can obtain, Vera Cruz imports in the proportion of thirteen or fourteen out of twenty-seven of all the other ports, whether on this eastern side or the Pacific or western side; while, as regards exports, they stand in the proportion of eighteen out of thirty-three. In the face of this, the place is, in some months, a mere pest-house, and

the circumstance occurred while I was in the capital, that the newly arrived American consul died in so short a space after landing that he had not time even to complete the necessary forms for assuming office.

No one supposes that the dismal locality will ever be chosen as a favourite resort for the goddess Hygeia; no one supposes she will choose this city as her own, as Venus chose Cyprus, her birthplace; but every one who knows Vera Cruz ought to know that it might be vastly improved. Its condition was becoming the subject of almost daily comment in the journals during my stay; the state of the cemetery, in particular, being the object of much animadversion. The mode of burying the dead is said to be very careless. The *Iris Veracruzano* has directed special attention to this fact, detailing the deficiencies of which it complains, and calling on the corporation to bestir themselves. To this question of the cemetery might be added that of drainage, and of marshy ground all round. Journals in the capital have called for a special commission to be appointed by the Government, to report minutely upon these questions. In short, some movement should be insisted on, which would awaken Vera Cruz out of the lethargic state in which it seems to lie, of taking its present condition as being one "of course," and either not worthy, or not capable, of improvement.

As regards the port, which is no port, increasing commerce will surely grow strong enough to provide

itself with convenience, as also to protect itself against the driving "northers;" though the fogs they bring may be irremediable. But when these winds really blow long and hard, the sea, I was told, seems threatening the very existence of the city.

There is yet another question that touches Vera Cruz, and a very important one it is—the collection of her customs. In all young countries this is more or less a serious question, and it seems to be so here. The following statement was given to me by so high an authority, and is in itself so striking, that I cannot but record it. If exact, it cannot but be of a family of kindred facts. Smuggling, then, was stated to me as being so extensive, that in the instance of French silks they can be bought cheaper in Mexico city than in New York, though the Mexican duty is double that of the American, and though the freight to Vera Cruz is higher than that to New York; not counting the freight on 263 miles by railway, after the goods are landed. Not only, it is said, are Custom-house positions given to individuals merely because they are poor, but sometimes to political agitators, merely to keep them quiet.

As I thought on all these things, Vera Cruz sank down into the evening wave, and as there was a mist upon the mountains, which wrapped the very peaks of Orizaba, Mexico was seen no more. So I turned my face from the west to the east, and thought upon my voyage back to Europe.

CHAPTER XIII.

HOMEWARD BOUND.

AND what shall I say of my voyage back to Europe? That it was prosperous as far as St. Thomas, I have already said; and it was prosperous to Plymouth, where I landed.

The first new impression I received was at Habana, into whose fine harbour we rode on the morning of Monday, September 5th. I had visited this city, with its 250,000 inhabitants, as will be remembered, on my outward voyage, before I had seen Mexico and had any corresponding city with which to compare it. Now, however, the case was otherwise, and I could not but be struck with the vast difference existing between a large city with a port, and a large city far up the country and totally removed from immediate intercourse with other nations. There are those who advocate inland capitals under an idea that they are safer. They are very often safe because they are shut up. Mexico is, I should suppose, one of the strongest examples of a city labouring

under the disadvantages of its remote position. Even this fact did not prevent Cortés from finding his way there, while, had it been possible, by the nature of the country, to construct the chief city and residence of the centre of government within reasonable distance of the shore, his invasion might have been frustrated. However, I do not intend to write a volume upon the relative advantages of the several positions. Habana is, I know, brimful of life and movement, arising mainly from its position, and there is a great deal more of pretension and of importance in the general aspect of the city, arising from this advantage.

I landed with the captain, and went to the company's offices, where we saw Mr. Ruthven, the agent; and we ran out by train in the afternoon to a very pleasant dinner with him and Mr. Derwent Smith. Desperate attempts were made by us to get an afternoon drive in the country, but the rain considered it would be better employed in cooling the air by coming down, than by stopping up above to allow us to go out. So we consented that this should be so, and returned on a fine night to the city, and to our boat.

The usual half-dozen of those conscientious Custom-house officers, whom I have before referred to, were on board, enjoying their food and lodging, with their accustomed condescension; occasionally glancing at us as unimportant curiosities, and honouring our chairs by occupying them, there being nothing to occupy themselves.

After touching at Porto Rico for a short time, we sailed for St. Thomas, in whose pretty port we arrived on the evening of Monday, the 12th of September.

"Do you see that light down there?" said the chief officer to me, as we were approaching the island, pointing to a glimmer on the dark sea off our starboard stern.

"Yes, rather far away."

"That's your vessel, the *Don*, coming along. She sails fast, and will be in very soon after us."

And this short prophecy came to pass as it was spoken. Signals, in the shape of Roman candles, were exchanged to say, "Here we are: we're glad to see you;" and at night, when both our vessels lay quietly alongside of one another, I went on board the *Don*, to choose my berth and to be introduced to Captain Woolward, who expressed no very emphatic objection to taking care of me to Plymouth.

This was the third time I had touched at this very pretty island, and I went on shore with one of the passengers who had come from Demerara on board the *Don*. I found the town very clean, and the country immediately outside very pretty. I just saw enough to make me curious to go round the island, or to mount one of the abrupt green mountains and take a survey of it. St. Thomas has been much abused, as being very unhealthy; but this is said to have been much more the case in past times, when it was a general loading and unloading station from

all the other ports; goods to and from Europe being transhipped there. Improved means of intercourse have, however, changed this commercial system, and St. Thomas has lost its reputed fevers because it has lost its importance. Whether wealth with disease, or poverty with health, be the preferable condition is a question which will not be inquired into here. Happy, at all events, are they who are not bound to make the choice.

The weather had been very hot from Vera Cruz to St. Thomas, the latter lying at even a lower latitude than the former, which marks less than 20°. But we were soon to take a north-easterly line, and this would bring us shortly into the cooler weather which we were all looking for. One experience I gained in this voyage which has removed a prejudice. Flannel shirts and paper collars I had already adopted; but I had never been able to reconcile myself to what are well known to all East Indians, "pyjamahs" for sleeping. I will never again invade the tropics without them. As to perspiration in hot climates, and particularly at sea, it is a rare chance for the system. I am not quite aware that physiologists have yet arrived at any very clearly ascertained conclusion as to the period within which any given whole body may be said to have passed away and been gradually and wholly replaced by another body; but, considering what I experienced between Southampton on going out and Plymouth on coming home, I cannot persuade

myself that I brought back one jot of the body I took away with me, even if my body in Mexico was, to any important extent, my former body of Southampton. The greater or less rapidity of the change must, of course, depend upon the use made of the article body, either by exercise or by domicile in hot atmospheres. If you will sail among the West India islands, you will find the latter do much more for you in this respect than a great deal of the former, even with much fatigue, could accomplish.

While all this was going on, I put myself through a course of treatment, which, at all events, did not result in my friends not recognizing me when I returned. Nor did I resort to the use of the engaging product of the quondam capital of Vera Cruz. But, having had my coffee—*soi-disant* coffee—and toast at six o'clock or thereabouts, I used to take my bath at half-past seven, and a glass of iced "tonic water" with a lime squeezed into it at eight; breakfast being ready at nine. I hold that tonic water to be one of the very best things on board; it stands in equal rank with gingerbread nuts, which I also hold to be almost as good now as I used to think them, not quite a hundred years ago, at Croydon Fair!

Our out-of-season passengers were not numerous, nor did I wish for more. But there was still the tooth-cutting child: there really was! and there was, of course, the "good-natured" mother with it. There was a good bouncing black nurse with it, too.

"Why do you let that child go on crying like that," I asked, "a jolly old sensible-looking thing that you are?"

"Hee, hee, hee!" she laughed, as all those women do, highly amused at my impatience. "It isn't mine, and it doesn't cry with me!" which was perfectly true. "How should you like half a dozen of them?"

How indeed! One thing I missed: no lady thought the bells ridiculous. Among our number, by the way, I must by no means omit to mention the renowned conjuror, an Austrian by birth, Professor Chevalier C. Herrmann, and Madame his wife, who were on their way to Vienna. Who shall say what cannot be done by sleight of hand? and who shall say that the human brain does not delight in mystery? Even the captain, pure seaman as he was, was now and then beguiled into being one of the open-eyed spectators at a sudden occasional short and startling exhibition. But Herr Herrman was more than a conjuror, and I enjoyed many an hour's varied conversation with him; for if he had not been almost all the world round, he, at all events, almost conjured me into the impression that he must have been: and what more do we want in conversation? which Bacon explained to be a series of pleasant walks in a garden, and not a high-road leading from one great city to another. And thus we sailed and sailed; greeting the mornings as they rose, and sleeping when the rolling globe brought night, turning us, in our longitude,

towards that tremendous outer darkness, so fearful to contemplate in theory, and yet, in Nature, essential to repose.

But we saw a ghostly sight at sea; not very rare, perhaps, to those who are always tossing on the waves, yet not so very frequent even to them; and certainly not so to mere chance wandering passengers. It occurred on the night of Friday, the 16th of September, the lat. 25° and the long. 57° having been marked at noon of that day. I had noticed strange colouring on the sea all day long, and, almost immediately after the sun set there was observable a great gathering of thunderstorms ahead, which were coming gradually towards us on an upper contrary current, for our own breeze below was with us. At about eight o'clock at night, the sea being quiet, these storms broke in united force upon us. The rain was almost unexampled; and on each side of us, and close at hand, the broad, straight lightning almost continually shot into the water, so that above there appeared to be a canopy of unceasing thunder. Then, when it all passed off, the captain came down to tell us to come upstairs, if we wished to see St. Elmo's lights. There they were on all the topmasts and on all the metals of the spars, being discharged from the low electric cloud, and looking as weird and mysterious as it is possible to conceive. Their tint was that of sapphire, like the glow-worm's. Well may sailors have been superstitious sometimes! But unfeeling Science delights to

checkmate wonder and mystery, to the great offence of blind imagination; yet, later on, it lifts, enlightens, and expands that faculty.

Of old, these lights were not believed in. Falconer, however, mentions them in his "Shipwreck":

> "High on the masts, with pale and livid rays,
> Amid the gloom portentous meteors blaze."

So also Camoens, in the eighteenth stanza of the fifth canto of his "Lusiads," where Vasco da Gama is supposed to be describing his voyage round the Cape of Good Hope towards India to the King of Melinda. These lines I shall take the liberty to quote from my own recent translation of that not sufficiently known old epic:

> "I saw and clearly saw the living light,
> Which sailors everywhere as sacred hold
> In time of storm, and crossing winds that fight,
> Of tempest dark, and desperation cold."

The expression, "living light"—"o lume vivo," in the original of Camoens—is far more natural than the word "blaze," which is too harsh for the still and ghostly glow of St. Elmo in the dark. But we will not criticize Falconer.

St. Elmo did not abide with us beyond, perhaps, five minutes, or a little more, altogether, and then he faded away, I know not where. But perhaps it was he who reappeared on the next early morning, just at sunrise, when a lovely rainbow shone high up into

the sky, and brought its colours all along the surface of the waves, even to our very vessel's side.

We made a splendid passage, the weather being propitious, and the *Don* a fine sailor. It was on Sunday, the 18th of September, that we experienced the first sense of cooler weather, and a day or two afterwards we rolled a little, by way of variety, under an adverse breeze; the weather being now and then rather fresh in the succeeding days. Thus some of us began to anticipate an unpleasant passage up the English Channel, a district of ocean of which few, I fancy, are much enamoured. But what really came to pass? On Saturday, the 24th, the day being rather dull, we began to speak vessels, and found ourselves coming again among those companions, after running our long, lonely course at sea; for ships were now appearing everywhere—some coming in, as we were coming; and others going out, which we did not desire at that moment to accompany. Then, on a fine Sunday morning, as fine and lovely a morning as ever shone from skies on earth, we came into the very English Channel, which this time greeted us with smiles! There lay the Scilly Isles, which I had visited in 1870, when war forbid a wider wander: there was the Land's End, the Black Bolèrium; Tol Penden Penwith; the Lizard, and all the coast of Cornwall; and there were the two Eddystone Light-houses, old and new: the new so much larger than the old, that the two called to mind the Giant and his

Dwarf. And between four and five o'clock in the afternoon we sailed into beautiful Plymouth Harbour, where I bid Captain Woolward and the *Don* good-bye, and went on shore with two or three more passengers.

I had more than one reason for disembarking at Plymouth. I did not wish to go across to Cherbourg, whither the *Don* was going; I did not wish to spend another night on board before coming to London; I do not like the Southampton Custom-house at all; nor the dock charges at all; and I wished to see this south-western corner of England again, which I have always held to be one of her most charming portions. Nor was I disappointed in my old impressions; for everything looked green and beautiful as we swung along on the following Monday morning through wood and meadow, under hill, and over dale, the journey being, perhaps, all the more enjoyed from my having unexpectedly been presented at the railway station with a first-class ticket at second-class fare, because I was a passenger by the mail-boat. I do not know that this was really so; but it is to be noted, if we will sometimes

> "Turn the eye
> Backward on self—the point supreme of manhood,"

how often we find satisfaction or annoyance are created or removed by trifles.

Surely last September wore a more than usual green! or was it that my eye had been of late less

regaled with that refreshing colour? The late Sir Francis Head—one among my early recollections, with his two sons, my schoolfellows—has written that when he returned from Canada to Old England and saw how young and beautiful she looked, he might have compared his feelings to those of a youth who, expecting to meet his grandmother, suddenly casts his eyes upon a lovely bride. The figure, if I remember rightly, occurs in his "Emigrant." I have often thought of it, and I thought of it again and appreciated it in September.

So here I am in London! and, until I next take wing, I roost upon my English branch, having relieved my mind of some few things I wished to say connected with my Flight to Mexico—and back again.

THE END.

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THE LUSIADS OF CAMOENS.

PORTUGUESE TEXT, with Translation by J. J. AUBERTIN.
With Map and Portraits. 2 vols. Demy 8vo. Price 30*s.*

Mr. Aubertin has translated without paraphrase, always verse by verse, even preserving those beauties of figurative grammatical expression which belong so specially to Camoens, so much so that they are called Camonianisms, and are the characteristics of a school. Although other translations may appear, Mr. Aubertin's translation is definite. It will be difficult to equal the author's interpretation of the Portuguese text, or surpass the faithfulness and poetical colouring of this translation, which may be justly considered a revelation of Camoens. A revelation, because Mr. Aubertin has proved that he can reproduce what is most difficult to preserve in foreign language, viz. the national sentiment.—*Athenæum.*

The later translation by Mr. Aubertin, daintily decorated and printed, is the work of a writer whose long residence amongst those who speak the idiom Fanshawe terms "uncourted," and in which Camoens wrote, entitles him to claim no mean authority as a translator of Portugal's Epic. . . . Mr. Aubertin has fulfilled his promise, keeping his muse well in hand. . . . We trust that Mr. Aubertin may be induced to give us a complete translation of Camoens' minor works. His Rimas deserve an English dress.—*Saturday Review.*

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Mr. Aubertin is by no means the first English interpreter of Camoens, but he is no doubt the best. . . . The metre adopted by Mr. Aubertin is that of the original, the Ottava Rima, which he handles with considerable skill.—*Pall Mall Gazette.*

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page and the translation on the other, the student has before him a very choice text-book if he chooses to make it so; and certainly, with its imitation hand-wove paper and its tasteful binding, it may be said, in all that pertains to the publisher's part, to vie with the very choicest books that have recently fallen from the English press.—*British Quarterly.*

To us Mr. Aubertin's reads as a work of unexampled regularity, and this, considering the versions we possess of the "Lusiads," is a very distinct praise. . . . To give an adequate sample of Mr. Aubertin's continuous excellence in his own well-considered line, is of course for us impossible.—*Notes and Queries.*

Mr. Aubertin has, without hyperbole, done his work splendidly; fettered as he was by the impossibility of reproducing the effect of the feminine rhymes, he has yet given the full force and not a little of the music of the original. . . . It may frankly be said—anybody who is capable of comparing original with translation must allow this—that Mr. Aubertin is the first to give to our nation an adequate rendering of one of the noblest epics of our era. . . . For delicate fancy, too, the episode of the enchanted island, with the pursuit of the nymphs, may be as highly commended in Mr. Aubertin's version as in the original, which is saying a good deal. . . . We have to thank Mr. Aubertin for a rare literary treat, and to compliment him upon having added a valuable work to our British Poetical Library; and it may be added, that the system of printing Portuguese and English stanzas side by side will make the work cosmopolitan, which is no small gain.—*Graphic.*

These beautiful volumes will be a very great gain to all lovers of general literature. . . . Mr. Aubertin has brought great poetic facility to bear upon his task, and has executed it with very great taste. The Preface alone is well worthy of perusal, and the accuracy and beauty of the translation can be easily tested by Portuguese scholars, the original and the translation being printed side by side.—*Liverpool Albion.*

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Only people who have themselves translated sonnets can measure the difficulties which beset an undertaking like Mr. Aubertin's. . . . He has generally followed Milton in conforming the structure of his sonnet to the Petrarchan type, which is that of Camoens. . . . Mr. Aubertin's spirited version of Goethe's "Erl King," near the end of this volume, may lead some readers to wish that he would rather turn his attention to freer styles of verse. . . . But, whatever he may advise for the future, the most fastidious critic will not refuse a favourable sentence to much of Mr. Aubertin's work.—*Athenæum.*

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"I was Old Egypt's and Old Egypt mine ;"

at once harmonious and forceful, poetic and true.—*Graphic.*

As a successful translator of the "Lusiads," Mr. Aubertin has a special claim to attention when he presents to us, in an English dress, a selection from the Sonnets of Camoens. The eight-lined stanzas of the "Lusiads" have, both in thought and rhythm, an easy flow which is not to be expected in sonnets conforming to the Italian model. The later undertaking of Mr. Aubertin has, therefore, been the more difficult; but he has faced the difficulties manfully, and overcome them.—*Guardian.*

Mr. Aubertin has done good service to literature by his translations from the Portuguese, first of the "Lusiads" of Camoens and now of the Sonnets of the same poet. . . . He has also adopted the same plan as in his former work, of printing his translation side by side with the original. . . . Taken broadly, Mr. Aubertin's translations render these beautiful sonnets with very great fidelity. They are without doubt far superior to any in the language.—*Liverpool Albion.*

Both students and lovers of poetry of the highest order must have pleasant recollections of the splendid version put forth some time since by Mr. J. J. Aubertin of Camoens' immortal epic, known to English readers as the "Lusiads;" and all who enjoyed that extraordinary rendering will be glad to hear that the same translator —himself an elegant writer of verse—has now produced a selection of seventy of the great Portuguese poet's sonnets, treated in the same manner as the more important work, that is to say, with the original text side by side with the English rendering, so as to admit of an estimate of the merits of the latter. It must at once be said that this can hardly be ranked too highly; the original measures have been cleverly reproduced, although in one or two instances slightly modified to meet the exigencies of our less liquid tongue, and Mr. Aubertin shows a facility in his rhymes, both masculine and feminine, and an absence of strain in the versification which are not often met with in combination, except in poets of the highest order. . . . Mr. Aubertin's verses show the same metrical facility as his translations, with some amount of poetic talent; amongst the best specimens we note the sonnets "Norway" and "A Dream," the heroic stanzas on Cæsar's Palace, and "Under the Yew Tree," especially the third verse; also the best translation we ever saw of Goethe's "Erl King." The volume is one to buy and keep.—*Morning Post.*

If Mr. Aubertin is not absolutely successful, it is scarcely to be expected that any Englishman, not a great original writer of verse, will succeed. We wish that all translators had the honesty and good faith to print the original text on alternate pages, as Mr. Aubertin does. . . . Mr. Aubertin's original poems show a pleasing and lofty vein of reflection. The best are, "The Old Widower Shepherd to his Dead Dog"—a Landseer in verse—"The Dying Palm Tree," and "Stanzas" (p. 241), the most musical of the poems :—

"Ye must be beautiful, ye shades ;
Thou must be fair, thou winding stream,
Whose peaceful breast no barque invades,
Whose waters wander like a dream."

—*Pall Mall Gazette.*

Mr. Aubertin already enjoys a well-established reputation as a translator of Camoens. He gave us a few years ago what still remains the best version of the "Lusiads" ever made ; and he now concludes his labour of love by translating seventy of the Portuguese poet's sonnets. We say concludes because Mr. Aubertin tells us in his preface that he considers he has "fulfilled his duty to Camoens" by "introducing

him fairly into English literature." Although Camoens had been repeatedly translated before, Mr. Aubertin is perfectly justified in claiming to have been the first fairly to introduce him to English readers. Previous translations had either been verbally accurate but poetically poor, or had owed their popularity—as in the case of Mickle's "Lusiads" and Lord Strangford's "Poems from the Portuguese"—to audacious infidelity to the original. Mr. Aubertin has, indeed, well repaid the debt of gratitude he owes his favourite author; but it is exactly because he has done so much that we regret his resolution to do no more. It is improbable that any future student of Camoens will possess all the qualities necessary for properly translating his poems in an equally eminent degree. . . . The skill of Mr. Aubertin's translation is throughout admirable; fully equal—and no higher praise could be given it—to his version of the "Lusiads." He is not only always accurate, but he gives the very rhymes of Camoens with a precision which is wonderful. His rendering of the "Great Sonnet XIX.," on the Death of Catharina de Athaide, is particularly fine. . . . Mr. Aubertin has added some original poems to his translations. They all have the merit of careful workmanship and a thoughtful spirit. It is, perhaps, a result of his devotion to Camoens that he is most successful with the sonnet form of verse.—*St. James' Gazette.*

Mr. Aubertin, who is the author of the best existing English translation of the "Lusiads," and whom long official residence in Brazil has made a master of the niceties of the rather difficult language, has not attempted to translate all the 352 sonnets, but has selected seventy from among the number. His version is, on the whole, interesting and accomplished. . . . Mr. Aubertin is sometimes extremely happy in rendering those curiously blunt ingenuities which are characteristic of Camoens, as where he translates

"Oh subtil invenção para seu dano"

by

"O stratagem to his own prejudice,"

than which nothing could be better.—*Saturday Review.*

Mr. Aubertin, whose translation of the "Lusiads" of Camoens is recognized as one of the best, as well as most faithful, that have yet been attempted, has performed another useful service for those English readers who desire an acquaintance with the one great poet of Portugal, by translating "Seventy Sonnets" selected from the 352 which Camoens left behind him, because, in Mr. Aubertin's opinion, it is possible to render them into our language without much sacrifice of either form or meaning. The translator's intimate knowledge of the Portuguese language and literature peculiarly qualified him for the performance of this delicate task, which he has accomplished with marked taste and judgment. The translation of each sonnet has the original placed opposite it, so that any reader who knows Portuguese can form an opinion for himself as to the merit of Mr. Aubertin's poem. In addition, this volume contains some miscellaneous translations and original poems, the best of which are those in the sonnet form. Here is one, which presents a noble idea in lines of admirable strength and symmetry :—

"Follow the Light—it cannot lead astray;
Thy danger lies in doubting—tread thy way;
Follow the Light—its path is dark to find,
But it were death to pause, outrun, delay;
If thou dost ever hope t' attain the day,
Follow—nor trust the darkness of thy mind.
'Tis a hard thing, and passing hard, to do!
Sometimes it stands, or flickers; seems untrue;
It cannot be—'tis probing thy mistrust;
It drags o'er bruising rocks; in the dank dew
Of chill despond it chains thee; but anew
It will move onward, shine and guide—it must.
It will not slay nor quit thee; hold thou fast;
Invoking, or upbraiding, cleave to the last!
Follow the Light!"

—*Scotsman.*

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